De Re Poetica:

OR,

REMARKS

UPON

POETRY.

WITH

CHARACTERS

AND

CENSURES

OF THE

Moſt Conſiderable Poets,

WHETHER

ANCIENT or MODERN.

Extracted out of the Beſt and Choiceſt *Criticks.*

By Sir *Thomas Pope Blount.*

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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

John Earl of *Mulgrave*,

Knight of the Moſt

NOBLE ORDER

OF THE

GARTER.

My Lord,

WHoever *looks into the Hiſtory of the firſt Ages of the World, will find, that nothing ever had a more general eſteem amongſt Mankind than* Poetry. Poets *were* then *dignified with the higheſt, and moſt*

Magnificent Titles, as the Civilizers of Men, *the* Preachers of Vertue, *and the* great Asserters of Morality. *Hence therefore it was, that the* Grecians *did in a manner* Deifie *their* Poets, *stiling them* ποιηταὶ, Makers *or* Creators, *which imported a sort of* Divineship *in 'em: And how great a Deference and Veneration the* Romans *had for those of this Profession, may sufficiently be inferr'd, from those proud and noble Structures, their* Theatres, *and* Amphitheatres, *Built* not *for the Use of their* Divines, Orators, *or* Philosophers, *but for their* Poets. *'Tis true,* my Lord, *in process of time this Noble Art became much sullied, and impair'd; as things most excellent are apteſt to degenerate; but this is no more an Argument against* Poetry, *than* Sects *and* Heresies *were against* Primitive Christianity. *The* Divine Plato *then (as some were pleased to call him) might very well have spar'd that severe Censure, of Banishing* Poets *out of his* Commonwealth; *and the rather, because among none of* their *Writings, were there to be found, such Lewd and Obscene Discourses, as in* his Phedrus *and* Convivium; *So that, upon a fair hearing, even the* Philosopher *himself, wou'd with more justice have deserv'd the* Outlawry.

My

The Dedication.

My Lord,

Had I nothing at all of Inclination to this Addreſs, as I hope *Your Lordſhip* will eaſily believe I have a great deal, yet I do not know, whether I ought not to have made it out of meer Policy. 'Tis certain, *my Lord*, You are a very dangerous Reader; a Writer therefore, who has but too much reaſon to apprehend Your Judgment, is bound in prudence to take You off if Poſſible. 'Tis not that I look upon a *Dedication* as a *Bribe*; but I find that ſometimes, when we have an idle Preſent made us, which 'tis impoſſible to conceal, we are apt to be very favourable, and counterfeit a Value of the thing we perhaps ſecretly deſpiſe, rather than own to the World, that any has been ſo hardy to make us an Offering of what we ſhou'd think *little*.

But however this be, *Your Lordſhip* has been before-hand with me, and ſo much to my advantage, as to render ſuch a Conſideration wholly needleſs: Already You have indulg'd this *Piece*, and allowing it for *uſeful*, have given it the great Character

Character desir'd to satisfie the *Author*'s Ambition. For as it is entirely a *Collection*, wherein I have nothing to answer for, or hope any thing from, but the Choice and Distribution of the Matter; if I have but made a profitable one, and employ'd my pains beneficially for the World, 'tis all I had to pretend to. After this, *my Lord*, I shall make You no excuses for the Honour I do my self in this *Dedication*; And if in it I seem any thing Vain or Presuming, I am contented so to do, provided I may find the Justice to have it thought at the same time, that 'tis the good Opinion, not of *my self*, but of *Your Lordship*, that has made me so.

Some perhaps who may not think so favourably of this Undertaking, as *Your Lordship* wou'd appear to do, will be apt to say, I am in an Error all this while, and very fondly have mistaken that for *Your Lordship's Judgment*, which was but Your *Complement*. For both our sakes, *my Lord*, I am willing to hope it is not so; but if it really is, and I am indeed deceiv'd in this Particular, then *Your Lordship* must acknowledge, I have taken care however

ever to revenge my ſelf handſomely, and that I could not have puniſh'd you better, than in preſenting You with the *Triſle*, which You only *ſeem'd* to approve.

Such as it is, *my Lord*, 'tis perfectly devoted to You. You will find it the eaſier perhaps to entertain it ſomewhat kindly, as it is intended at leaſt to do Service to an *Art*, which 'tis well known, is *Your Lordſhip's* Favourite. Nor indeed do I wonder at it. For is it not Natural, and would not any Man be fond of a *Game*, which he play'd at ſo well, as always to come off a *Winner*?

I wou'd not, nor wou'd I be thought to flatter; but I think I may ſay without it, that as no People, perhaps, ſince the *Old Romans*, have carried *Poetry* ſo high in all Points as the *Engliſh*, ſo, that thoſe who have engag'd of the *better Rank*, have particularly ſignaliz'd themſelves. *Poetry* which to ſome Few has been a very good *Wife*, has yet in general been a better *Miſtreſs*; And the *Gentlemen*, her *Lovers*, have found kinder Treatment, than the *Traders*, her *Husbands*. Methinks *ſhe* appears with them in better Humour, and

more

more eaſie; There's more of *Nature* in the Buſineſs, and ſhe ſeems to grant her Favours with greater Willingneſs. Indeed the Wit of the Men, is like the Beauty of the Women, of *Quality*; whoſe Features may be the ſame as other People's; but then there's ſomething of *Fine*, ſomething of *Free*, ſomething of *Lively* in the *Air*, that makes a very agreeable Diſtinction. In this *Dividend* of Praiſe, *Your Lordſhip's* Stock of Merit entitles You to one of the largeſt ſhares. I will not drive it further. Among ſo many handſome *Muſes*, 'twould ſcarce be civil to determine the Preeminence. I ſay *ſo many*, and 'tis for *Your Lordſhip's* credit that there are ſo many. One Wou'd not value much the Reputation of a good Face, where the general Deficiency that Way wou'd make a very Moderate one be admir'd. But in a *Nation* of *Beauty*, to be in the firſt Rank of the *Fair*, is indeed a *Glory*.

Thus, *my Lord*, You have ſerv'd in the *Poetick Army* with Honour; But then You have given us Leſſons of *Diſcipline* and *Conduct* too. *Poetry* is doubly oblig'd to *Your Lordſhip* for ſome of the *beſt Rules*, as well

as

as one of the moſt *ſhining Examples*. *She* is indebted yet further; *She* owes You not only what You have done Your ſelf, but, in part, what has been done by another too. I cannot ſay You brought her a *new Lover*, but You brought an *Old one* on *afreſh*. For I take it to be more than probable by the Beginning of that *Poem*, which I will not repeat, that the *Eſſay* on *Tranſlated* Verſe was perfectly occaſion'd by the *Eſſay* on *Poetry*. I know not what *Your Lordſhip* thinks of this; but to be but Juſt to my Lord *Roſcommon* we muſt conclude, That he was *too great a Maſter* to be provok'd, and ſet a Work by any One, who was not a *Great One* too.

With ſuch good Inclinations and after ſuch good Offices done to *Poetry*, give me leave, *my Lord*, once more to offer You what is here endeavour'd in its *Favour*. It has indeed a publick Deſign, but it has not that alone. We who make *Books*, are like Gentlemen who make *Balls*; Which, though intended for the Entertainment of the Town, uſe yet to have a more immediate Relation to ſome One of the *Fair Ladies*. If therefore what is now expos'd to

the World, may be of any Reliſh to *Your Lordſhip*, 'tis the utmoſt Ambition of him who is,

(My Lord)

Your Lordſhips

Moſt Devoted, and Obliged

Humble Servant.

Thomas Pope Blount.

THE

De Re Poetica:

OR,

REMARKS

UPON

POETRY.

Concerning the Antiquity of Poetry.

ARISTOTLE divides all Poetry, in relation to the Progreſs of it, into *Nature without Art*; *Art begun*; and *Art compleated.*

Mr. *Dryden* tells us, That *Mankind*, even the moſt Barbarous, have the Seeds of Poetry implanted in them.

The firſt *Specimen* of it was certainly ſhewn in the Praiſes of the *Deity*, and Prayers to him; And as they are of *Natural Obligation*, ſo, ſays *Dryden*, they are likewiſe of *Divine Inſtitution.* Which *Milton* obſerving, introduces *Adam* and *Eve*, every Morning adoring God in *Hymns* and Prayers. The firſt Poetry was thus begun, in the Wild Notes of Natural Poe-

try, before the Invention of *Feet* and *Measures*. *See* **Dryd.** *Dedic. before* Juvenal, *pag.* 17.

Rapin observes, That, since *Linus*, *Orpheus*, and *Eumolpus* were famous for their Poems, before the *Trojan* Wars; those are certainly mistaken, who date Poetry from that time; I rather (*says he*) incline to their Opinion, who make it as old as the World it self; which Assertion as it ought to be understood of Poetry in general, so especially of Pastoral, which, according to *Scaliger*, was the most Ancient kind of Poetry, and resulting from the most *Ancient* way of living. **Rap.** *de Carmine* Pastorali.

Theophilus Gale remarks, That it is generally affirm'd by the Learned, that Poesie was the most *Ancient* of all *Artificial Literature*, especially amongst the *Grecians*; and we have for it the Testimony of *Strabo*, lib. 1. where he undertakes to prove, that Prose *is only an imitation of* Poesie, &c. Thus also *Vossius* (*de Histor. Græcis*, lib. 1. cap. 1. pag. 7.) asserts and proves, *That the* Greek *Historians and Philosophers were after the* Poets. So also *Jackson* (on the *Authority of the Scripture*) gives it as from unquestionable Antiquity, that all other set Speech, whether *Historical* or *Rhetorical*, was but the Progeny of Poesie, falling in latter times from its wonted State. And indeed (says *Gale*) it's evident from the Thing it self, that all the ancient Learning of the *Grecians*, both *History*, *Morality*, *Philosophy*, and *Theologie*, was delivered in Poesie. Hence *Orpheus*, and other Poets were anciently stil'd Διδάσκαλοι, *Teachers*; because they taught Men *Theologie*, and *Morality*, &c. Whence also the *Ancient Discourses* of the *Philosophers* were stiled Ἄσματα, *Songs*, &c. because they deliver'd their *Precepts* of *Philosophy* in *Verse*. So *Pythagoras*, and the rest of the Philosophers of his Sect: yea, among the

the *Latins*, *Carmina* were us'd for *Moral Precepts*. **Theoph. Gale**'s *Court* of the *Gentiles*.

Sir *William Temple* says, *Poetry*, he thinks, is generally agreed, to have been the first sort of Writing, that has been us'd in the World, and in several Nations to have preceeded the very Invention or Usage of *Letters*. This last, *says he*, is certain in *America*, where the first *Spaniards* met with many Strains of *Poetry*, and left several of them Translated into their Language; which seem to have flow'd from a true *Poetick* Vein, before any *Letters* were known in those Regions. The same is probable of the *Scythians*, the *Grecians*, and the *Germans*. *Aristotle* says, the *Agathyrsi* had their Laws all in *Verse*; and *Tacitus*, that the *Germans* had no *Annals* nor *Records* but what were so; and for the *Grecian Oracles*, delivered in them, we have no certain account when they began, but rather reason to believe it was before the Introduction of *Letters* from *Phœnicia* among them. *Pliny* tells it, as a thing known, that *Pherecides* was the first who writ *Prose* in the *Greek Tongue*, and that he liv'd about the time of *Cyrus*; whereas *Homer* and *Hesiod* liv'd some hundred of years before that Age; and *Orpheus*, *Linus*, *Musæus*, some Hundreds before them: And of the *Sybils*, several were before any of those, and in *Times* as well as *Places*, whereof we have no clear Records now remaining. What *Solon* and *Pythagoras* writ, is said to have been in *Verse*, who were something older than *Cyrus*; and before them, were *Archilochus*, *Simonides*, *Tyrtæus*, *Sappho*, *Stesichorus*, and several other *Poets* famous in their times. The same thing is reported of *Chaldea*, *Syria*, and *China*; and among the ancient *Western Goths* (our Ancestors) the *Runick Poetry* seems to be as old as their *Letters*; and their Laws, their Precepts of

Wiſdom, as well as their Records, their Religious Rites, as well as their Charms and Incantations, to have been all in *Verſe*.

Among the *Hebrews*, and even in *Sacred Writ*, the moſt *Ancient*, is by ſome Learned Men eſteem'd to be the Book of *Job*; and that it was written before the time of *Moſes*; and that it was a Tranſlation into *Hebrew*, out of the old *Chaldæan* or *Arabian* Language. Now I think it is out of Controverſie, that the Book of *Job* was written Originally in *Verſe*, and was a Poem upon the Subject of the Juſtice and Power of God, and in Vindication of his Providence. But if we take the Books of *Moſes* to be the moſt *ancient* in the *Hebrew* Tongue, yet the *Song* of *Moſes* may probably have been written before the reſt; as that of *Deborah*, before the Book of *Judges*, being Praiſes ſung to God, upon the Victories or Succeſſes of the *Iſraelites*, related in both. And I never read the laſt, ſays Sir *Will. Temple*, without obſerving in it, as True and Noble Strains of *Poetry* and *Picture*, as in any other Language whatſoever, in ſpight of all Diſadvantages from Tranſlations into ſo different Tongues, and common Proſe. If an Opinion of ſome Learned Men both *Modern* and *Ancient* could be allow'd, that *Eſdras* was the Writer or Compiler of the firſt Hiſtorical Parts of the *Old Teſtament*, though from the ſame Divine Inſpiration as that of *Moſes* and the other Prophets, then the *Pſalms* of *David* would be the firſt Writings we find in *Hebrew*; and next to them, the *Song* of *Solomon*, which was written when he was young, and *Eccleſiaſtes* when he was old; ſo that from all ſides, both *Sacred* and *Prophane*, it appears that *Poetry* was the firſt ſort of Writing, known and uſed in the ſeveral Nations of the World.

It may ſeem ſtrange, I confeſs, ſays Sir *Will. Temple*, upon the firſt Thought, that a ſort of Style ſo regular and ſo difficult, ſhould have grown in uſe, before the other ſo eaſie and ſo looſe; But if we conſider, what the firſt end of *Writing* was, it will appear probable from Reaſon as well as Experience; For the True and General end, was but the *Help* of *Memory*, in preſerving that of *Words* and of *Actions*, which would otherwiſe have been loſt, and ſoon vaniſh away, with the Tranſitory Paſſage of Humane Breath and Life. Before the Diſcourſes and Diſputes of *Philoſophers* began to buſie, or amuſe the *Græcian* Wits, there was nothing Written in *Proſe*, but either Laws, ſome ſhort Sayings of Wiſe Men, or ſome Riddles, Parables, or Fables, wherein were couch'd, by the *Ancients*, many Strains of Natural or Moral Wiſdom and Knowledge; and beſides theſe, ſome ſhort Memorials of Perſons, Actions, and of Times.

Now 'tis obvious enough to conceive, ſays Sir *Will. Temple*, how much eaſier all ſuch *Writings* ſhould be Learnt and Remembred, in *Verſe* than in *Proſe*, not only by the Pleaſure of Meaſures and of Sounds, which gives a great Impreſſion to *Memory*, but by the Order of Feet which makes a great Facility of tracing one Word after another, by knowing what ſort of Foot or Quantity muſt neceſſarily have preceeded or followed the Words we retain, and deſire to make up.

This made *Poetry* ſo neceſſary, before *Letters* were Invented, and ſo convenient afterwards; and ſhews, that the great Honour and general Requeſt, wherein it has always been, has not proceeded only from the Pleaſure and Delight, but likewiſe from the Uſefulneſs and Profit of *Poetical* Writings. Sir **Will. Temple**'s *Eſſay of* Poetry, *pag.* 23, 24, 25, &c.

Poetry *commended.*

THe *Grecians*, to ſhew the high Veneration they had for their *Poets*, call'd 'em *Makers* or *Creators*, which denoted a *Divineſhip* in 'em: And the *Romans*, to expreſs the great Honour they had for *theirs*, ſtyl'd 'em *Prophets*. Nor (indeed) is it eaſie to diſtinguiſh between the *Prophets* and *Poets* of *Iſrael*. For what is *Jeremy's Lamentation*, but a kind of *Sapphick Elegy*? And *David's Pſalms* are not only *Poems*; but *Songs*, *Snatches*, and *Raptures* of a *flaming Spirit*.

Mr. *Samuel Woodford* tells us, That if we conſider *Poeſie* in her firſt Inſtitution, e're ſhe became a common Proſtitute to Luſt, Flattery, Ignorance, and Ambition, we ſhall find her alone acknowledged as the Soveraign Princeſs of the Civiliz'd World, and behold her from her Throne giving Laws, not only to their *Religion* and *Policy*, but alſo to their *Manners*. Her Court was eſteem'd the proper and only School of *Vertue*, to which the greateſt Princes form'd theirs, and under her Cuſtody alone was kept ſeal'd that Fountain, whence all the profitable Inſtructions of Life were to be drawn. *Philoſophy* it ſelf was a thing of no uſe, and deſtitute of Arms, till *She* ſupply'd them; nor durſt it appear in the World without the eaſie Chain of *Verſe*, in token of Submiſſion to her, for its *Paſs-port*. And when afterward the *Porch* and *Academy* by main force brake it off, the ſtricteſt Precepts of the moſt Rigid Sect, as to the regulating of *Manners*, came infinitely ſhort of thoſe Examples, which ſhe exhibited on her Theatres. The ſame may be ſaid of almoſt all other Arts, that from *Her* they receive their Birth and Vigour. Neither was this

this Divine Miſtreſs leſs courteouſly receiv'd into the Camp, where her *ſoft Numbers* were with pleaſure heard amidſt the confuſed noiſe of Arms. Hence mighty Generals had the beſt Inſtruction both for their Conduct and Valour, and were encouraged by the Records of Antiquity, which ſome Poet had faithfully preſerved, to do themſelves famous Acts, worthy the like Praiſe of Poſterity. Such was Poeſie of Old, with a Command as abſolute, and unconfin'd, as her Dominions, and always found either ſerving at the *Altars*, or of *Counſel Royal* to the greateſt Princes. **Sam. Woodford's** *Pref. to his* Paraphraſe *upon* David's Pſalms.

Rapin remarks, That the true Value of *Poetry* is ſo little known, that ſcarce ever is made a true Judgment of it. 'Tis the Talent of Wits only, that are above the Common Rank, to eſteem of it according to its Merit: and one cannot conſider, how *Alexander, Scipio, Julius Cæſar, Auguſtus*, and all the Great Men of Antiquity have been affected therewith, without conceiving a Noble Idea of it. Indeed, *Poeſie*, of all *Arts*, is the moſt Perfect: for the Perfection of other *Arts* is limited; but this of *Poeſie* has no Bounds. **Rap.** *of* Poeſie, *Part* 1. *Sect.* 1.

Sir *William Temple* ſays, that, for his part, he does not wonder, that the famous Dr. *Harvey*, when he was reading *Virgil*, ſhould ſometimes throw him down upon the Table, and ſay, *He had a Devil*; nor that the Learned *Meric Caſaubon*, ſhould find ſuch Charming Pleaſures and Emotions, as he deſcribes, upon the reading ſome parts of *Lucretius*; that ſo many ſhould cry, and with down-right Tears, at ſome Tragedies of *Shakeſpear*; and ſo many more ſhould feel ſuch Turns or Curdling of their Blood, upon the reading, or hearing ſome excellent Pieces of *Poetry*; nor that *Octavia* fell into

into a Swound, at the recital made by *Virgil* of thoſe *Verſes* in the Sixth of his *Æneids*.

This, ſays Sir *William Temple*, is enough to aſſert the Powers of *Poetry*, and diſcover the Ground of thoſe Opinions of Old, which deriv'd it from *Divine Inſpiration*, and gave it ſo great a ſhare, in the ſuppoſed Effects of *Sorcery* or *Magick*. **Temple**'s *Eſſay of* Poetry, *pag.* 12, 13.

Mr. Edmund Waller, *on the Earl of* Roſcommon's *Tranſlation of* Horace's *Art of* Poetry.

Well ſounding Verſes *are the Charm we uſe,*
Heroick Thoughts, and Vertue to infuſe;
Things of deep Senſe we may in Proſe unfold,
But they move more, in lofty Numbers told;
By the loud Trumpet, *which our Courage aids,*
We learn that Sound, *as well as* Senſe *perſwades.*

The Lord *Roſcommon*, in his Eſſay on *Tranſlated Verſe*:

By ſecret Influence of Indulgent Skies,
Empire, *and* Poeſie *together riſe.*
True Poets *are the* Guardians *of a* State,
And when They fail, *portend approaching* Fate.
For that which Rome *to Conqueſt did inſpire,*
Was not the Veſtal, *but the* Muſes Fire;
Heaven *joyns the* Bleſſings, *no* Declining *Age*
E're felt the Raptures *of* Poetick Rage.

Sir Samuel

Sir *Samuel Tuke*, in his Prologue to the *Five Hours Adventure*:

Our Ancient Bards *their* Morals *did diſpence*
In Numbers, *to inſinuate the* Senſe;
Knowing that Harmony *affects the Soul,*
And who our Paſſions *charm, our* Wills *controul.*

Mr. *John Oldham*, in Imitation of *Horace's Art* of *Poetry*:

Hence Poets *have been held a* Sacred Name,
And plac'd with Firſt Rates *in the Liſts of* Fame.
Verſe *was the Language of the* Gods *of-Old,*
In which their Sacred Oracles *were told:*
In Verſe *were the firſt Rules of* Vertue *taught,*
And Doctrine thence, *as* now *from* Pulpits *ſought:*
By Verſe *ſome have the Love of* Princes *gain'd*
Who oft vouchſafe ſo to be entertain'd,
And with a Muſe *their weighty cares unbend.*
Then think it no diſparagement, dear Sir,
To own your ſelf a Member of that Quire,
Whom Kings *eſteem, and* Heaven *does inſpire.*

Poetry *Encourag'd in former Ages: but diſcourag'd in this.*

The wiſe *Ben-Sirach*, among other Characters of his *Heroes*, puts in this among the Reſt, That they were *ſuch as found out Muſical Tunes, and recited* Verſes *in Writing. Eccleſ.* 44. 5.

Sir *William Temple* says, The honour and request the Ancient *Poetry* has liv'd in, may not only be observ'd from the Universal Reception and Use in all Nations from *China* to *Peru*, from *Scythia* to *Arabia*, but from the Esteem of the Best and the Greatest Men, as well as the Vulgar. Among the *Hebrews*, *David* and *Solomon*, the Wisest Kings, *Job* and *Jeremiah*, the Holiest Men, were the Best Poets of their Nation and Language. Among the *Greeks*, the Two most Renowned Sages and Law-givers were *Lycurgus* and *Solon*, whereof the *Last* is known to have Excell'd in *Poetry*, and the *First* was so great a Lover of it, that to his Care and Industry we are said (by some Authors) to owe the Collection and Preservation of the loose and scatter'd Pieces of *Homer*, in the order wherein they have since appear'd. *Alexander* is reported neither to have Travel'd nor Slept, without those admirable *Poems* always in his Company. *Phalaris*, that was Inexorable to all other Enemies, relented at the Charms of *Stesichorus*'s Muse. Among the *Romans*, the First and great *Scipio*, passed the soft hours of his Life in the Conversation of *Terence*, and was thought to have a part in the Composition of his Comedies. *Cæsar* was an Excellent *Poet* as well as *Orator*, and compos'd a *Poem* in his Voyage from *Rome* to *Spain*; relieving the Tedious Difficulties of his March, with the Entertainments of his *Muse*. *Augustus* was not only a Patron, but a Friend and Companion of *Virgil* and *Horace*; and was himself, both an Admirer of *Poetry*, and a Pretender too, as far as his Genius would reach, or his busie Scene allow. 'Tis true, says Sir *William Temple*, since his Age, we have few such Examples of great Princes favouring or affecting *Poetry*, and as few perhaps of great *Poets* deserving it. Whether it be, that

that the fierceneſs of the *Gothick* Humours, or Noiſe of their perpetual Wars frighted it away; or that the unequal mixture of the Modern Languages could not bear it. Certain it is, that the great Heights and Excellency, both of *Poetry* and *Muſick*, fell with the *Roman* Learning, and Empire, and have never ſince recover'd the Admiration and Applauſes that before attended them. **Temple**'s *Eſſay of* Poetry, *pag.* 60, 61.

Mr. *Charles Cleeve* tells us, that it ſtands Recorded of the Famous *Alcæus*, that great *Poet* and *Souldier*, that he uſed to make his Speeches in *Verſe* at the head of his Army; and, that he thought there was as much *Martial Muſick* in the Harmonious Cadence of Numbers, as in the louder Noiſe of *Drums* and *Hautboys*.

He alſo *remarks*, That the great *Scipio* had *Ennius* always in his Camp: And a greater than *He*, the *Macedonian* Youth, carried a whole knot of the *Brothers* of the *Quill*, into *Aſia* with him; And, in ſhort, that in thoſe Times, there was ſcarce any Great Man without his *Poeta à Latere*.

But according to *Cleeve*, in this our Age, Mankind has quite different Thoughts; For *Poets* are *now* reckon'd among that *Claſs* of *Beings*, that carry along with them no real Uſe, or Profit; but ſerve only to fill up the *Vacuities* of the *Creation*, and pleaſe purely upon the account of Variety. Nay, ſome are of opinion, that if *Nature* ever made any thing in vain, 'twas a *Poet*. Well, for once (ſays *Cleeve*) let *Poets* have the Worſhipful Name of *Jeſters* to Mankind; let us grant for once, That they are but *Riſus Plorantis Mundi*, as was ſaid of the *Rainbow*, the Sport and Caprice of *Nature*; Men work'd off when ſhe was in an excellent merry Vein: Yet hard Fate it is, That while, like *Silk-Worms*, they unravel their

very Bowels for the Pleaſure and Luxury of Mankind; they themſelves muſt lye Entomb'd in their own Bottoms. **Charles Cleeve**'s *Dedicat. to the Lord* Churchill, *before his* Poems.

The truth is, ſays Mr. *John Norris*, this moſt Excellent and Divine Art of *Poetry*, has of late been ſo cheapned and depretiated, by the *Bungling* Performances of ſome, who thought themſelves *Inſpired*, and whoſe *Readers* too have been more kind to 'em than their *Planets*, that *Poetry* is grown almoſt out of *Repute*, and men come ſtrongly prejudiced againſt any thing of this Kind, as expecting nothing but *Froth* and *Emptineſs*; and to be a *Poet*, goes for little more than a *Country Fiddler*. But certainly *He* had once *another Character*, and that in as *nice* and *wiſe* an Age as this. If we may believe the great *Horace*, He was one

——Cui mens Divinior, atque os
Magna locuturum——

He had then his *Temples* ſurrounded with a *Divine Glory*, ſpoke like the *Oracle* of the God of *Wiſdom*, and could deſcribe no *Hero* greater than *Himſelf*. *Poetry*, ſays Mr. *Norris*, was once the *Miſtreſs* of all the Arts in the *Circle*, that which held the *Reins* of the World in her hand, and which gave the *Firſt*, and (if we may judge by the Effects) perhaps the *Beſt Inſtitutes*, for the *Moralizing* and *Governing* the *Paſſions* of Mankind.

It may (ſays *Norris*) appear ſtrange indeed, that in ſuch a *Refining* Age as this, wherein all things ſeem ready to receive their *laſt Turn* and *finiſhing Stroke*, *Poetry* ſhould be the only thing, that remains unimprov'd. And yet

yet ſo it happens, that which we generally have now a-days, is no more like the thing it was formerly, than *Modern Religion* is like *Primitive Chriſtianity*. 'Tis with *this* as with our *Muſick*. From Grave, Majeſtick, Solemn Strains, where deep Inſtructive Senſe is ſweetly convey'd in Charming *Numbers*, where equal Addreſs is made to the *Judgment* and *Imagination*, and where *Beauty* and *Strength* go hand in hand, 'tis now for the moſt part dwindl'd down to light, frothy ſtuff, conſiſting either of mad Extravagant *Rants*, or ſlight *Witticiſms*, and little *Amorous Conceits*, fit only for a *Tavern Entertainment*, and that too among Readers of a *Dutch* Palate. **Joh. Norris**'s *Pref. to his* Collection *of* Miſcellanies.

Mr. *Thomas Rymer* obſerves to us, That at the beginning of the *Reformation*, the Name of *Poet* was a mighty Scare-Crow to the *Mumpſimus* Doctors every where. The *German* Divines, and Profeſſors at *Cologn*, were nettled and uneaſie by this *Poet*, and the *t'other Poet*; Poet *Reuclin*, Poet *Eraſmus*. Every body was reckon'd a *Poet* that was more a *Conjurer* than themſelves. And belike, the *Jeſuits* are ſtill of Opinion, That the *Stage-Plays* have not done 'em Service. *Campanella* tells us, that *the* German *and* Gallican *Hereſie began with Sing-Song, and is carried on by Comedies and Tragedies.* **Tho. Rymer**'s Short view *of* Tragedy, *pag.* 34.

Oldham complaining of the little Encouragement *Poets* meet with in this Age:

Should mighty Sappho *in theſe days revive,*
And hope upon her Stock *of* Wit *to live*;
She muſt to Creſwell's *trudge to mend her Gains,*
And lett her Tail *to hire, as well as* Brains.
What Poet *ever fin'd for* Sheriff? *or who*
By Wit *and* Senſe *did ever* Lord Mayors *grow.*

My

My own hard Usage here I need not press,
Where you have every day before your face,
Plenty of fresh resembling Instances:
Great Cowley's *Muse the same ill Treatment had,*
Whose Verse *shall live for ever to upbraid*
Th' ungrateful World, that left such Worth unpaid.
Waller *himself may thank* Inheritance
For what he else had never got by Sense.
On Butler *who can think without just Rage,*
The Glory, *and the* Scandal *of the Age?*
Fair stood his hopes, when first he came to Town,
Met every day with Welcomes of Renown,
Courted, and lov'd by all, with Wonder read,
And Promises of Princely favour fed:
But what Reward for all had he at last,
After a life in dull Expectance pass'd?
The Wretch at Summing up his mis-spent days,
Found nothing left, but Poverty *and* Praise:
Of all his Gains by Verse *he could not save*
Enough to purchase Flannel *and a* Grave:
Reduc'd to Want, he *in due time falls sick,*
Was fain to die, and be interr'd on Tick:
And well might bless the Feaver *that was sent*
To rid him hence, and his worse Fate *prevent.*

Dryden making his Complaint upon the same Subject:

We act by fits and starts, like drowning Men,
But just peep *up, and then* dop *down again.*
Let those who call us Wicked, *change their Sense,*
For never Men liv'd more on Providence.
Not Lott'ry Cavaliers are half so poor,
Nor broken Citts, nor a Vacation Whore.

So

So wretched, that if Pharaoh *could Divine,*
He might have ſpar'd his Dream of Seven lean Kine,
And chang'd his Viſion for the Muſes Nine.
See the *Miſcellany Poems*, pag. 293.

The *ſame Author* in another place:

The Fate, which governs Poets, *thought it fit,*
He ſhou'd not raiſe his Fortunes by his Wit.
The Clergy thrive, and the litigious Bar;
Dull Heroes fatten with the Spoils of War:
All Southern Vices, Heav'n be prais'd, are here;
But Wit's *a Luxury you think too dear.*
When you to cultivate the Plant are loth,
'Tis a ſhrewd Sign 'twas never of your growth:
And Wit in Northern Climates will not blow,
Except, like Orange-trees, *'tis hous'd from* Snow.
Dryd. Prologue to *Aureng-Zebe.*

That good Humour *is eſſentially Neceſſary to a* Poet.

Abraham Cowley tells us, There is nothing that requires ſo much ſerenity and chearfulneſs of *Spirit*, as *Poetry*. The Mind muſt not be either overwhelm'd with the *Cares* of *Life*; or overcaſt with the *Clouds* of *Melancholly* and *Sorrow*; or ſhaken and diſturb'd with the Storms of Injurious *Fortune*; it muſt, like the *Halcyon*, have *fair Weather* to breed in. The *Soul* muſt be fill'd with bright and delightful *Idea's*, when it undertakes to communicate delight to others; which is

the

the main end of *Poesie*. One may see through the Stile of *Ovid de Trist.* the humbled and dejected Condition of *Spirit* with which he wrote it; there scarce remains any footsteps of that Genius,

Quem nec Jovis ira, nec ignes, &c.

The Cold of the Country had strucken through all his Faculties, and benumm'd the very *Feet* of his *Verses*. He is himself, methinks, like one of the *Stories* of his *own Metamorphoses*; and though there remain some weak *Resemblances* of *Ovid* at *Rome*, it is but as he says of *Niobe*,

In vultu color est sine sanguine, lumina mœstis
Stant immota genis; nihil est in Imagine vivum,
Flet tamen——

The truth is, for a Man to *write well*, it is necessary to be in *good Humour*; neither is *Wit* less Eclips'd with the *unquietness* of *Mind*, than *Beauty* with the *Indisposition* of Body. So that 'tis almost as hard a thing to be a Poet in despight of *Fortune*, as it is in despight of *Nature*. **Abiah. Cowley**, *in his Preface.*

Dryden remarks, That *Ovid*, going to his Banishment, and writing from on Shipboard to his Friends, excus'd the Faults of his *Poetry* by his Misfortunes; and told them, That good *Verses* never flow, but from a serene and compos'd Spirit. *Wit*, says *Dryden*, which is a kind of *Mercury*, with Wings fasten'd to his Head and Heels, can fly but slowly in a damp Air. **Dryd.** Dedic. *before his* Panegyrick *on the Countess of* Abingdon.

Mr. *Tho-*

Mr. *Thomas Flatman*, in the Preface to the third Edition of his *Poems*, tells us, That he believes the Reader might eaſily diſcover in his ſeveral *Poems*, when 'twas *Fair Weather*, when *Changeable*, and when the *Quick-Silver* fell down to *Storm* and *Tempeſt*.

Sir *Richard Fanſhaw*, in his Tranſlation of *Paſtor Fido*:

But in this Age (inhumane Age the while!)
The Art of Poetry *is made too vile.*
Swans *muſt have pleaſant Neſts, high feeding, fair*
Weather to ſing: and with a load of Care
Men cannot climb Parnaſſus *Cliff: for he*
Who is ſtill wrangling with his Deſtiny
And his Malignant Fortune, becomes hoarſe,
And loſes both his Singing *and* Diſcourſe.

Act V. Scene I.

That a Poet *ſhould keep his* Fancy, *and* Wit *within due Bounds.*

Rapin obſerves, That nothing can more contribute to the perfection of *Poetry*, than a *Judgment* proportion'd to the *Wit*; for the greater that the *Wit* is, and the more Strength and Vigour that the Imagination has to form thoſe *Idea's* that enrich *Poeſie*; the more Wiſdom and Diſcretion is requiſite to moderate that heat, and govern its natural *Fury*. For *Reaſon* ought to be much ſtronger than the *Fancy*, to diſcern how far the Tranſports may be carried. 'Tis a great Talent to forbear ſpeaking all one thinks, and to leave ſome-

thing for others to employ their Thoughts upon. 'Tis not ordinarily known how far Matters ſhould be carried; a Man of an *accompliſh'd Genius* ſtops regularly where he ought to ſtop, and retrenches boldly what ought to be omitted. 'Tis a great fault not to *leave a thing when 'tis well*; for which *Apelles* ſo much blam'd *Protogenes*. This Moderation (ſays *Rapin*) is the Character of a great *Wit*, the Vulgar underſtand it not; and (whatever is alledg'd to the contrary) never any, ſave *Homer* and *Virgil*, had the diſcretion to *leave a thing when 'twas well*. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *of* Poeſie, 1. *Part*, *Sect.* xvi.

Rimer tells us, That *Fancy* in *Poetry*, is like *Faith* in *Religion*; it makes far Diſcoveries, and ſoars above *Reaſon*, but never claſhes, or runs againſt it. *Fancy* leaps, and friſks, and away ſhe's gone; whilſt *Reaſon* rattles the Chain, and follows after. *Reaſon* muſt conſent and ratifie whatever by *Fancy* is attempted in its abſence; or elſe 'tis all *null* and void in Law. However, in the *Contrivance* and *Oeconomy* of a *Play*, *Reaſon* is always principally to be conſulted. Thoſe (ſays *Rimer*) who object againſt *Reaſon*, are the *Fanaticks* in *Poetry*, and are never to be ſav'd by their *Good Works*. **Rimer** *of the* Tragedies *of the* laſt Age, *pag.* 8.

No Man (ſays *Dryden*, in his Preface to *Troilus* and *Creſſida*) ſhould pretend to *write*, who cannot temper his *Fancy* with his *Judgment*: Nothing is more dangerous to a raw Horſeman, than a hot-mouth'd *Jade* without a Curb.

'Tis not enough to have a ſhare of Wit,
There muſt be Judgment *too to manage it*;

For

For Fancy's *like a rough, but ready Horſe,*
Whoſe Mouth is govern'd more by Skill *than* Force.
Ch. Cotton *before* Flatman's *Poems.*

The Earl of *Mulgrave*, in that Incomparable *Poem*, his *Eſſay* on *Poetry*, tells us:

As all is Dullneſs, *when the* Fancy's *bad,*
So, without Judgment, Fancy *is but mad;*
And Judgment *has a boundleſs Influence,*
Not only in the Choice of Words *or* Sence,
But on the World, *on* Manners, *and on* Men;
Fancy *is but the* Feather *of the* Pen;
Reaſon *is that ſubſtantial uſeful Part,*
Which gains the Head, *while t'other wins the* Heart.

Rapin remarks, That there is not a greater hinderance to the *Epick* or *Heroick* Poem, than to have a *Wit* too *vaſt*; for ſuch will make nothing *exact* in theſe kind of Works, whoſe chief Perfection is the *Juſtneſs*. Theſe *Wits* that ſtrike at all, are apt to paſs the Bounds: the *Swinge* of their *Genius* carries them to Irregularity; nothing they do is *exact*, becauſe their *Wit* is not: All that they ſay, and all that they imagine, is always *vaſt*; they neither have proportion in the *Deſign*, nor juſtneſs in the *Thought*, nor exactneſs in the *Expreſſion*. This fault is common to moſt of the *Modern Poets*, eſpecially to the *Spaniards*. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *of* Poeſie, *Part* 2. *Sect.* 3.

Another Fault which often does befall,
Is when the Wit *of ſome great* Poet *ſhall*
So Overflow, *that is, be none at all;*

That all his Fools *ſpeak* Senſe, *as if* poſſeſt,
And each by Inſpiration *breaks his Jeſt;*
If once the Juſtneſs *of each Part be loſt,*
Well we may laugh, but at the Poet's *coſt.*
That ſilly Thing, Men call Sheer-wit, *avoid,*
With which our Age ſo nauſeouſly is cloy'd;
Humour *is all,* Wit *ſhould be only brought*
To turn agreeably ſome proper *Thought.*

Mulgr. Eſſay on *Poetry.*

Wit *is not to adorn, and guild each part;*
That ſhews more Coſt *than* Art.
Jewels *at* Noſe *and* Lips *but ill appear;*
Rather than all Things Wit, *let none be there.*
Several Lights *will not be ſeen,*
If there be nothing elſe between.
Men doubt, becauſe they ſtand ſo thick i'th' Skie,
If thoſe be Stars, *which paint the* Galaxie.

Abr. Cowley of *Wit.*

Dryden ſays, Though no Man will ever decry *Wit*, but he who deſpairs of it himſelf; and who has no other quarrel to it, but that which the *Fox* had to the *Grapes*; yet, as Mr. *Cowley* (who had a greater Portion of it than any Man I know) tells us in his *Character* of *Wit*, Rather than all *Wit* let there be none; I think, ſays *Dryden*, there's no folly ſo great in any *Poet* of our Age, as the Superfluity and Waſte of *Wit* was in ſome of our *Predeceſſors:* particularly we may ſay of *Fletcher* and of *Shakeſpear*, what was ſaid of *Ovid*, *In omni ejus ingenio, facilius quod rejici, quàm quod adjici poteſt, invenies.* The contrary of which was true in *Virgil*, and our Incomparable *Johnſon.* **Dryd.** *Pref. to the* Mock-Aſtrologer.

That

That a Poet *may write upon the Subject of* Love; *but he muſt avoid* Obſcenity.

SO it is, ſays *Abraham Cowley*, that *Poets* are ſcarce thought *Free-men* of their *Company*, without paying ſome Duties, and Obliging themſelves to be true to *Love*. Sooner or later they muſt all paſs through that *Tryal*, like ſome *Mahumetan Monks*, that are bound by their Order, once at leaſt in their Life, to make a *Pilgrimage* to *Mecca*.

In furias ignemq; ruunt; Amor omnibus idem.

But we muſt not always make a judgment of their *Manners* from their *Writings* of this kind; as the *Romaniſts* uncharitably do of *Beza*, for a few laſcivious *Sonnets* compos'd by him in his Youth. It is not in this Senſe that *Poeſie* is ſaid to be a kind of *Painting*; it is not the *Picture* of the *Poet*, but of *Things* and *Perſons* imagin'd by him. He may be in his own practice and diſpoſition a *Philoſopher*, nay a *Stoick*, and yet ſpeak ſometimes with the Softneſs of an Amorous *Sappho*. **Abr. Cowley** *in his* Preface.

Yet do I not their Sullen Muſe approve,
Who from all modeſt *Writings baniſh* Love.
Boileau's *Art of* Poetry, *pag.* 59.

But though *Love* be a Subject allow'd to *Poets*, yet any thing that's in the leaſt *Obſcene*, muſt wholly be

be avoided. The *Muſes* of *true Poets*, ſays *Rapin*, are as *chaſt* as *Veſtals*.

> Here, *as in all things elſe, is moſt unfit*
> *Bare* Ribaldry, *that poor Pretence to Wit.*
> **Mulgrave**'s Eſſay *on* Poetry.

> *Immodeſt Words admit of no defence;*
> *For Want of* Decency, *is want of* Senſe.
> **Roſcomon** *on* Tranſlated Verſe, *pag.* 8.

> *Much leſs can that have any place,*
> *At which a* Virgin *hides her face:*
> *Such* Droſs, *the* Fire *muſt purge away; 'tis juſt*
> *The* Author bluſh *there, where the* Reader *muſt.*
> **Abr. Cowley**'s Ode *of* Wit.

Obſcene Diſcourſe, ſays a *Modern Author*, is now grown a thing ſo common, that one would think we were fallen into an Age of *Metamorphoſis*, and that the *Brutes* did (not only *Poetically*, and in fiction) but *really* ſpeak. For the Talk of Many is ſo *Beſtial*, that it ſeems to be but the Conceptions of the more libidinous Animals cloath'd in Humane Language. And yet even *this* muſt paſs for Ingenuity, and be counted among the higheſt Strains of *Wit*. A wretched Debaſement of that *Sprightful Faculty*, thus to be made the *Interpreter* to a *Goat* or *Boar*: for doubtleſs had thoſe Creatures but the *Organs* of *Speech*, their Fancies lie enough that way to make them as good Company, as thoſe who more ſtudiouſly apply themſelves to this ſort of Entertainment. *The* **Author** *of the* **Whole Duty of Man**, *in his* Government *of the* Tongue, *pag.* 204, 205.

That

That the moſt difficult part of a Poet, *is, to deſcribe the* Manners, *and the* Paſſions.

Rapin tells us, That as the *Painter* draws Faces by their Features; ſo the *Poet* repreſents the *Minds* of Men by their *Manners*: and the moſt general Rule for Painting the *Manners*, is to exhibit every Perſon in his proper *Character*. A *Slave*, with baſe Thoughts, and ſervile Inclinations. A *Prince*, with a liberal Heart, and *Air* of Majeſty. A *Souldier*, fierce, inſolent, ſurly, and inconſtant. An *Old Man*, covetous, wary, jealous. 'Tis in deſcribing the *Manners*, that *Terence* triumph'd over all the *Poets* of his time, in *Varro*'s Opinion, for his Perſons are never found out of their *Characters*. He obſerves their *Manners* in all the Niceties and Rigours of *Decorum*, which *Homer* himſelf has not always done, as ſome pretend. *Longinus* cannot endure the *Wounds*, the *Adulteries*, the *Hatred*, and all the other Weakneſſes to which he makes the *Gods* obnoxious, contrary to their *Character*.

The Soveraign Rule for treating of *Manners*, ſays *Rapin*, is to Copy them after *Nature*, and above all to ſtudy well the *Heart* of Man, to know how to diſtinguiſh all its *Motions*. 'Tis this which none are acquainted with: the *Heart* of Man is an *Abyſs*, where none can ſound the Bottom: it is a *Myſtery*, which the moſt Quick-ſighted cannot pierce into, and in which the moſt cunning are miſtaken; at the worſt the *Poet* is oblig'd to ſpeak of *Manners* according to the common Opinion. *Ajax* muſt be repreſented *grum*, as *Sophocles*;

phocles; *Polyxena* and *Iphigenia*, *generous*, as *Euripides* has repreſented them. To conclude, the *Manners* muſt be proportionable to the *Age*, to the *Sex*, to the *Quality*, to the *Employment*, and to the *Fortune* of the Perſons. And, in a word, as nothing tolerable can be perform'd in *Poetry* without *this knowledge*, ſo *with it* all becomes *admirable*. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtotle *of* Poeſie, 1. *Part*, *Sect.* XXV.

The *Paſſions*, ſays *Rapin*, give no leſs Grace to *Poetry*, than the *Manners*; when the *Poet* has found the Art to make them move by their *natural Springs*. *Quintilian* tells us, *without the* Paſſions *all is cold and flat in the Diſcourſe*: for *they* (ſays *Rapin*) are, as it were, the *Soul* and *Life* of it; but the Secret is, to expreſs them according to the ſeveral Eſtates, and different degrees from their Birth: and in this diſtinction conſiſts all the *Delicacy*, wherewith the *Paſſions* are to be handled, to give them that *Character*, which renders them *admirable*, by the ſecret *Motions* they impreſs on the *Soul*. *Hecuba* in *Euripides* falls into a *Swound* on the Stage, the better to expreſs all the *Weight* of her Sorrow, that could not be repreſented by Words. But *Achilles* appears with too much *Calmneſs* and Tranquility at the Sacrifice of *Iphigenia*, deſign'd for him in Marriage by *Agamemnon*: his Grief has Expreſſions too little ſuiting to the natural *Impetuoſity* of his *Heart*. *Clytemneſtra* much better preſerves her *Character*; ſhe diſcovers all the *Paſſion* of a Mother in the loſs of a Daughter, ſo lovely as was this *Unfortunate* Princeſs, whom they were about to Sacrifice, to appeaſe the *Gods*: and *Agamemnon* generouſly lays aſide the tenderneſs of a *Father*, to take, as he ought, the *Sentiments* of a *King*; He neglected his own Intereſt, to provide for the Publick. To conclude, 'tis this exact Diſtinction of the

different

different Degrees of *Paſſion*, that is of moſt effect in *Poetry*: for this gives the Draught of *Nature*, and is the moſt infallible *Spring* for moving the *Soul*; but, ſays *Rapin*, it is good to obſerve, that the moſt ardent and lively *Paſſions* become *cold* and *dead*, if they be not well manag'd, or be not in their place. The *Poet* muſt judge when there muſt be a *Calm*, and when there muſt be *Trouble*; for nothing is more ridiculous, than *Paſſion* out of Seaſon. But it is not enough to move a *Paſſion* by a *notable Incident*, there muſt be Art to *conduct* it, ſo far as it ſhould go; for by a *Paſſion* that is imperfect and *abortive*, the Soul of the *Spectator* may be *ſhaken*; but this is not enough, it muſt be *raviſh'd*. **Rap**. *ibid*. Sect. *xxxvi*.

Dryden remarks, That to deſcribe the *Paſſions* naturally, and to move them artfully, is one of the greateſt Commendations that can be given to a *Poet*; *To write pathetically*, ſays *Longinus*, *cannot proceed but from a lofty Genius*. A *Poet*, ſays *Dryden*, muſt be born with this Quality; yet, unleſs he help himſelf by an acquir'd Knowledge of the *Paſſions*, what they are in their own nature, and by what Springs they are to be mov'd, he will be ſubject either to raiſe them where they ought not to be rais'd, or not to raiſe them by the juſt Degree of *Nature*, or to amplifie them beyond the Natural Bounds, or not to obſerve the *Criſis*, and *Turns* of them, in their cooling and decay: All which Errors, ſays *Dryden*, proceed from want of Judgment in the *Poet*, and from being unskill'd in the Principles of *Moral Philoſophy*. Nothing is more frequent in a Fanciful Writer, than to foil himſelf by not managing his Strength: therefore, as in a *Wreſtler*, there is firſt requir'd ſome meaſure of force, a well-knit Body, and active Limbs, without which all Inſtruction would be vain; yet, theſe

being granted, if he want the *Skill* which is neceſſary to a *Wreſtler*, he ſhall make but ſmall advantage of his natural Robuſtiouſneſs: So in a *Poet*, his inborn Vehemence and force of Spirit, will only run him out of breath the ſooner, if it be not ſupported by the help of *Art*. The roar of *Paſſion* indeed may pleaſe an *Audience*, three parts of which are ignorant enough, to think all is moving which is *Noiſe*, and it may ſtretch the Lungs of an Ambitious *Actor*, who will die upon the Spot for a thund'ring Clap; but it will move no other *Paſſion* than *Indignation*, and contempt, from Judicious Men. He who would raiſe the *Paſſion* of a Judicious *Audience*, ſays a learned *Critick*, muſt be ſure to take his *Hearers* along with him; if *they* be in a *Calm*, 'tis in vain for him to be in a *Huff*: he muſt move them by degrees, and kindle with 'em; otherwiſe he will be in danger of ſetting his own heap of *Stubble* on fire, and of burning out by himſelf, without warming the Company that ſtand about him. **Dryd.** *Pref. to* Troilus *and* Creſſida.

Would you your Works *for ever ſhould remain,*
And, after Ages paſt, be ſought again?
In all you write, *obſerve with Care and Art*
To move the Paſſions, *and incline the Heart.*
If, in a Labour'd Act, *the pleaſing* Rage
Cannot our Hopes *and* Fears *by turns ingage,*
Nor in our Mind a feeling Pity *raiſe;*
In vain with Learned Scenes you fill your Plays:
Your cold Diſcourſe can never move the Mind
Of a Stern Critick, *naturally unkind;*
Who, juſtly tir'd with your Pedantick flight,
Or falls aſleep, or cenſures all you write.

The

The Secret is, Attention first to gain;
To move our Minds, and then to entertain:
That, from the very op'ning of the Scenes,
The first may shew us what the Author *means.*
I'm tir'd to see an Actor *on the Stage,*
That knows not whether he's to Laugh, *or* Rage;
Who, an Intrigue unravelling in vain,
Instead of Pleasing, *keeps my Mind in* pain:
I'de rather much the nauseous Dunce *should say*
Downright, my Name is Hector *in the Play;*
Than with a Mass of Miracles, *ill joyn'd,*
Confound my Ears, and not instruct my Mind.

Boileau's Art *of* Poetry, *pag.* 30, 31.

Would'st have me weep? thy self must first begin:
Then, Telephus, *to pity I incline,*
And think thy Case, and all thy Suff'rings mine;
But if thou'rt made to act thy part amiss,
I can't forbear to sleep, or laugh, or hiss;
Let Words *express the* Looks *which* Speakers *wear;*
Sad, fit a Mournful, and dejected Air;
The Passionate *must huff, and storm, and rave;*
The Gay *be pleasant, and the* Serious *grave.*
For Nature *works, and moulds our Frame within,*
To take all manner of Impressions *in.*
Now *makes us hot, and ready to take fire,*
Now *Hope,* now *Joy,* now *Sorrow does inspire;*
And all these Passions *in our face appear;*
Of which the Tongue *is sole* Interpreter:
But he whose Words *and* Fortunes *do not suit,*
By Pit *and* Gall'ry *both, is hooted out.*

Oldham in Imitation of *Horace's Art* of *Poetry*, pag. 10.

That a Poet *muſt take great care of his* Language *and* Expreſſion.

THe *Expreſſion* or *Language*, ſays *Rapin*, muſt have five *Qualities*, to have all the Perfection that *Poetry* demands: It muſt be *apt*, *clear*, *natural*, *ſplendid*, and *numerous*.

The *Language* muſt in the *firſt place* be *apt*, and have nothing that is impure or barbarous: for though one may ſpeak what is *great*, *noble*, and *admirable*; all is deſpicable and odious, if the *Purity* be wanting: the greateſt *Thoughts* in the World have not any *Grace*, if the *Conſtruction* be defective. This *Purity* of Writing is of late ſo ſtrongly Eſtabliſh'd among the *French*, that he muſt be very *hardy*, ſays *Rapin*, that will make *Verſe* in an Age ſo *delicate* and *curious*, unleſs he underſtand the *Tongue* perfectly.

Secondly, the *Language* muſt be *clear*, That it may be Intelligible; for one of the greateſt faults in Diſcourſe, is *Obſcurity*: in this *Camoens*, whom the *Portugueſe* call their *Virgil*, is extreamly blameable; for his *Verſe* are ſo *obſcure*, that they may paſs for *Myſteries*: and the Thoughts of *Dante* are ſo *profound*, that much Art is requir'd to dive into them. *Poetry* demands a more *clear Air*, and what is leſs incomprehenſible.

The *third Quality*, is, That it be *natural*, without affectation, according to the Rules of *Decorum*, and *good Senſe*. *Studied Phraſes*, a too *florid Stile*, *fine Words*, *Terms ſtrain'd* and *remote*, and all *extraordinary* Expreſſions, are inſupportable to the *true Poeſie*; only *Simplicity* pleaſes, provided it be ſuſtain'd with *Greatneſs* and *Majeſty*: but this *Simplicity*, ſays *Rapin*, is not known, except

except by *Great Souls*, the *little Wits* underſtand nothing of it; 'tis the *Maſter-piece* of *Poeſie*, and the *Character* of *Homer* and *Virgil*. The Ignorant hunt after *Wit*, and *fine Thoughts*, becauſe they are ignorant.

Fourthly, The *Language* muſt be *lofty* and *ſplendid*; for the *common* and ordinary Terms are not proper for a *Poet*; he muſt uſe Words that partake nothing of the *Baſe* and *Vulgar*, they muſt be *Noble* and *Magnificent*; the Expreſſions *ſtrong*, the Colours *lively*, the Draughts *bold*: his Diſcourſe muſt be ſuch as may equal the greatneſs of the *Idea's* of a *Workman*, who is the *Creator* of his Work.

In the *laſt place*, The *Language* muſt be *Numerous*, to uphold that *Greatneſs* and *Air* of *Majeſty*, which *reigns* throughout in *Poeſie*; and to expreſs all the force and dignity of the great things it ſpeaks: *Terms* that go off roundly from the Mouth, and that fill the Ears, are ſufficient to render all *Admirable*, as *Poeſie* requires. But, ſays *Rapin*, this is not enough, that the Expreſſions be *Stately* and *Great*, there muſt likewiſe be *Heat* and *Vehemence*: and above all, there muſt *ſhine* throughout the *Diſcourſe* a certain *Grace* and *Delicacy*, which makes the principal *Ornament*, and moſt Univerſal *Beauty*.

Rap. *Reflex. on* Ariſt. *of* Poeſie, 1. *Part*, *Sect.* xxvii.

Obſerve the Language *well in all you write,*
And ſwerve not from it in your loftieſt flight.
The ſmootheſt Verſe, and the exacteſt Senſe
Diſpleaſe us, if ill Engliſh *give offence:*
A barb'rous Phraſe no Reader can approve;
Nor Bombaſt, Noiſe, or Affectation love.
In ſhort, without pure Language, *what you write,*
Can never yield us Profit, or Delight.

Boileau's Art of *Poetry*, Engliſh'd by Sir *Will. Soame.*

Rapin

Rapin does further remark, That there is a particular *Rhetorick* for *Poetry*, which the *Modern Poets* ſcarce underſtand at all; this Art conſiſts in diſcerning very preciſely what ought to be ſaid *Figuratively*, and what to be ſpoken *ſimply*; and in knowing well, where Ornament is requir'd, and where not. *Taſſo* underſtood not well this Secret, he is too *trim* and too *polite*, in places, where the *Gravity* of the Subject demanded a more ſimple and ſerious Stile: As for Example, where *Tancred* comes near the Tomb of *Clorinda*, he makes the Unfortunate Lover, who came from ſlaying his *Miſtreſs*, ſpeak *points*, inſtead of expreſſing his Sorrow *naturally*; he commits this fault in many other places. *Guarini* in his *Paſtor Fido*, and *Bonarelli* in his *Phillis*, are often guilty of this Vice; they always think rather to ſpeak things *wittily*, than *naturally*: this is the moſt ordinary *Rock* to *mean Wits*, who ſuffer their Fancy to flie out after the pleaſing Images they find in their way: they ruſh into the Deſcriptions of *Groves*, *Rivers*, *Fountains*, and *Temples*, which *Horace* calls *Childiſh*, in his Book of *Poeſie*. 'Tis only the Talent of Great Men to know to *ſpeak*, and to be *ſilent*; to be *florid*, and to be *plain*; to be *lofty*, and to be *low*; to uſe *Figures*, and to ſpeak *ſimply*; to mingle *Fiction* and *Ornament*, as the Subject requires; *finally*, to manage all well in his Subject, without pretending to give *delight*, where he ſhould only *inſtruct*; and without *riſing* in *great Thoughts*, where natural and *common Sentiments* are required; to conclude, a *ſimple Thought* in its proper place, is more worth than all the moſt *exquiſite Words*, and *Wit out of Seaſon*. **Rap.** *Ibid.* Sect. *xxxiv.*

Figures

Figures *of* Speech, *which* Poets *think ſo fine,*
Art's needleſs *Varniſh to make* Nature *ſhine,*
Are all but Paint *upon a Beauteous face,*
And in Deſcriptions *only claim a Place.*
But to make Rage declaim, *and* Grief diſcourſe,
From Lovers in deſpair fine *things to* force,
Muſt needs ſucceed, for who can chuſe but pity
A dying *Hero miſerably* Witty?
But, oh, the Dialogues, where Jeſt and Mock
Is held up like a Reſt at Shittle-cock!
Or elſe like Bells, *eternally they* chime,
They ſigh *in* Simile, *and* die *in* Rhime.

Mulgr. *Eſſay* on *Poetry.*

'Tis Mr. *Dryden's* Obſervation, That, as in a Room, contriv'd for State, the height of the Roof ſhou'd bear a proportion to the *Area*; ſo, in the Heightenings of *Poetry*, the Strength and Vehemence of *Figures* ſhou'd be ſuited to the Occaſion, the Subject, and the Perſons. All beyond this (ſays *Dryden*) is monſtrous; 'tis out of Nature; 'tis an Excreſcence, and not a living part of *Poetry*. **Dryd.** *in a Dedic. to the Lord* Haughton, *before the* Spaniſh Fryar.

Concerning the Poetick Licence.

THE *Poetick Licence*, ſays *Dryden*, in his *Apology for Heroick Poetry*, is that *Birthright*, which is deriv'd to *Poets*, from their great *Fore-fathers*, even from *Homer* down to *Ben.* And they who would deny it them,

them, have, in plain terms, the *Fox*'s Quarrel to the *Grapes*, they cannot reach it. I will, says *Dryden*, presume to say, That the Boldest Strokes of *Poetry*, when they are manag'd Artfully, are those which most delight the Reader.

> Poets, *like* Lovers, *should be bold and dare,*
> *They spoil their Business with an Over-care:*
> *And he who servilely creeps after Sence,*
> *Is safe, but ne're will reach an Excellence.*
>
> Dryd. Prologue to *Tyran. Love.*

If no Latitude, says *Dryden*, is to be allow'd a *Poet*, you take from him not only his *Licence* of *Quidlibet audendi*, but you tie him up in a straiter compass than you would a *Philosopher*. This is indeed *Musas colere severiores:* You would have him follow *Nature*, but he must follow her on foot: You have dismounted him from his *Pegasus*. Dryden's *Essay of* Dram. Poesie, *pag.* 48.

The truth is, says Sir *William Temple*, there is something in the Genius of *Poetry*, too Libertine to be confin'd to many Rules; and whoever goes about to subject it to such Constraints, loses both its *Spirit* and *Grace*, which are ever Native, and never learnt, even of the best Masters. 'Tis as if, to make *Excellent Honey*, you should cut off the Wings of your *Bees*, confine them to their Hive, or their Stands, and lay Flowers before them, such as you think the sweetest, and like to yield the finest Extraction; you had as good pull out their Stings, and make arrant *Drones* of them. *They* must range through *Fields*, as well as *Gardens*, chuse such Flowers as they please, and by Proprieties and Scents they only know and distinguish: They must Work

up

up their Cells with admirable Art, extract their Honey with infinite Labour, and ſever it from the Wax, with ſuch Diſtinction and Choice, as belongs to none but themſelves to perform, or to judge. **Temple's** *Eſſay of* Poetry, *pag.* 20, 21.

Mr. *Richard Wooley* tells us, that *Lucan*, whoſe beſt Character conſiſts, in having made ſome very *happy Bold Strokes*, would have been ſpoil'd, had he been checkt every time he offer'd at too lofty *Flights*. But now we find he has been *ſucceſsfully Bold*, whereas more *regularity* would have render'd him too *flat* and *cold*: But now *feliciter audet*, is his juſt *Encomium*. It is therefore (ſays *Wooley*) with *Poets*, as 'tis with thoſe *young Heroes*, whom an *undiſcreet Valour* more becomes, than an *over-circumſpect* and *cautious Prudence*. And therefore Sir *William Temple* remarks, That *Rules* at beſt are capable only to prevent the making of *bad Verſes*, but never able to make men *good Poets*. **Rich. Wooley's** *Compleat Library*, Novemb. 1692.

The Priviledge *that Ancient* Poets *claim*
Now turn'd to Licence *by too juſt a Name*,
Belongs to None but an Eſtabliſht Fame,
Which ſcorns *to* take *it*———
Abſurd Expreſſions, Crude, Abortive Thoughts,
All the lewd Legion *of* Exploded Faults,
Baſe Fugitives *to that* Aſylum *fly*,
And Sacred Laws *with* Inſolence *deſie*.
Not thus our Heroes *of the* Former *Days*,
Deſerv'd *and* Gain'd *their never fading* Bays;
For I miſtake, or far the greateſt Part,
Of what ſome call Neglect, *was* Study'd Art.
When Virgil *ſeems to* Trifle *in a Line*,
'Tis like a Warning-Piece, *which gives the* Sign

To wake *your* Fancy, *and* prepare *your Sight,*
To reach the noble Height of ſome unuſual Flight.
Roſcomon on *Tranſlated Verſe*, pag. 21.

Whether Art *or* Nature *contributes moſt to* Poetry.

Rapin tells us, This is one of thoſe Queſtions unreſolv'd, which might be proper for a *Declamation*, and the Deciſion is of ſmall Importance: it ſuffices, that we know both the *one* and the *other* are of that moment, that none can attain to any Soveraign Perfection in *Poetry*, if he be defective in *either*: So that both (ſaith *Horace*) muſt mutually aſſiſt each other, and conſpire to make a *Poet* accompliſh'd. But though *Nature* be of little value, without the help of *Art*, yet we may approve of *Quintilian*'s Opinion, who believ'd, that *Art* did leſs contribute to that Perfection, than *Nature*. And by the Compariſon that *Longinus* makes betwixt *Apollonius* and *Homer*, *Eraſtoſthenes* and *Archilochus*, *Bacchilides* and *Pindar*, *Ion* and *Sophocles*, the *former* of all which never tranſgreſſed againſt the Rules of *Art*, whereas *theſe other* did; it appears, that the advantage of *Wit* is always preferr'd before that of *Art*. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *of* Poeſie, *Part* 1. *Sect.* xiii.

Concerning Poets *there has been Conteſt,*
Whether they're made by Art *or* Nature *beſt:*
But if I may preſume in this Affair,
Amongſt the Reſt my Judgment to declare,

No

No Art *without a* Genius *will avail,*
And Parts *without the help of* Art *will fail;*
But both Ingredients joyntly muſt unite
To make the happy Character compleat.
Oldham, in Imitation of *Horace's Art* of *Poetry*, pag. 35.

One may be an *Orator*, ſays *Rapin*, without the *natural* Gift of *Eloquence*, becauſe *Art* may ſupply that defect; but no Man can be a *Poet* without a *Genius*: the want of which, no *Art* or Induſtry is capable to repair. This *Genius* is that *Celeſtial Fire* intended by the *Fable*, which enlarges and heightens the *Soul*, and makes it expreſs things with a lofty Air. Happy is he (ſays *Rapin*) to whom *Nature* has made this Preſent, by *this* he is raiſed above himſelf; whereas *others* are always low and creeping, and never ſpeak but what is mean and common. He that hath a *Genius*, appears a *Poet* on the ſmalleſt and moſt minute Subjects, by the *turn* he gives them, and the noble manner in which he expreſſes himſelf. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtotle *of* Poeſie, *Part* 1. *Sect.* vi.

Raſh Author, *'tis a vain preſumptuous Crime,*
To undertake the Sacred Art of Rhime;
If at thy Birth the Stars that rul'd thy Sence
Shone not with a Poetick *Influence:*
In thy ſtrait Genius *thou wilt ſtill be bound,*
Find Phœbus *deaf, and* Pegaſus *unſound.*
Boileau's *Art of* Poetry, *pag.* 1.

Number, *and* Rhime, *and that* Harmonious Sound,
Which never does the Ear with Harſhneſs *wound,*

Are neceſſary, *yet but* vulgar *Arts,*
For all in vain theſe ſuperficial parts
Contribute to the Structure of the Whole
Without a Genius *too, for that's the* Soul;
A Spirit *which inſpires the Work throughout,*
As that of Nature *moves the World about;*
A Heat which glows in every Word that's writ,
'Tis ſomething of Divine, *and more than* Wit;
It ſelf unſeen, yet all things by it ſhown,
Deſcribing All Men, *but deſcrib'd by none.*
Where doſt thou dwell? what Caverns of the Brain
Can ſuch a vaſt, and mighty thing, contain?

Mulgr. Eſſay on *Poetry.*

That a Poet *ſhould not be addicted to* Flattery.

PLutarch tells us, That *Philoxenus*, for deſpiſing ſome dull *Poetry* of *Dionyſius*, was by him condemn'd to dig in the Quarries: from whence being by the Mediation of Friends remanded, at his return *Dionyſius* produced ſome other of his *Verſes*, which as ſoon as *Philoxenus* had read, he made no reply, but calling to the Waiters, ſaid, *Let them carry me again to the Quarries.* Now, if a *Heathen Poet* could prefer a *Corporeal* Slavery before a *Mental*, what name of Reproach is great enough for them, who can ſubmit to both, in purſuit of thoſe poor ſordid Advantages they project by their *Flatteries*?

Rapin ſays, Nothing has contributed more to the diſreputation of *Poetry*, than thoſe vile and unmanly *Flatteries*,

teries, whereby the greateſt part of *Poets* have debas'd themſelves.

But Want *at laſt baſe* Flatt'ry *entertain'd,*
And old Parnaſſus *with this Vice was ſtain'd:*
Deſire of Gain *dazling the* Poets *Eyes,*
Their Works were fill'd with fulſome Flatteries.
Thus needy Wits *a vile Revenue made,*
And Verſe *became a* Mercinary *Trade.*
Debaſe not with ſo mean a Vice thy Art;
If Gold *muſt be the Idol of thy Heart,*
Fly, fly th' unfruitful Helicomian *Strand,*
Thoſe Streams *are not inrich'd with* Golden *Sand:*
Great Wits, *as well as* Warriours, *only gain*
Laurels *and* Honours *for their Toil and Pain:*
But what? an Author cannot live on Fame,
Or pay a Reck'ning with a lofty Name:
A Poet *to whom* Fortune *is unkind,*
Who when he goes to Bed has hardly din'd;
Takes little Pleaſure in Parnaſſus *Dreams,*
Or reliſhes the Heliconian *Streams.*
Horace *had Eaſe and Plenty when he writ,*
And free from Cares, for Money or for Meat,
Did not expect his Dinner from his Wit.
'Tis true; but Verſe *is cheriſh'd by the Great,*
And now *none famiſh who deſerve to eat:*
What can we fear, when Virtue, Arts, and Senſe,
Receive the Stars propitious Influence?

Boileau's Art of *Poetry*, pag. 63, 64.

I pity, from my Soul, Unhappy Men,
Compell'd by Want *to* Proſtitute *their* Pen;

Who

Who muſt, like Lawyers, *either* Starve *or* Plead,
And follow, *right or wrong, where* Guinnys lead.
Roſcomon's Eſſay on *Tranſlated Verſe*, pag. 18.

Concerning the Eglogue, Bucolick, *or* Paſtoral.

Julius Scaliger tells us, That the *Paſtoral* was the moſt Ancient kind of *Poetry*, and reſulting from the moſt *Ancient* way of living: *Singing* (ſays *Scaliger*) *firſt began amongſt Shepherds as they fed their Flocks, either by the Impulſe of Nature, or in Imitation of the Notes of Birds, or the whiſpering of Trees.* **Jul. Scalig.** De Re Poëticâ, *lib.* 1. *cap.* 4.

Since the *firſt* Men were either *Shepherds* or *Ploughmen*, and *Shepherds*, as may be gather'd out of *Thucydides* and *Varro*, were before the *others*, they were the *firſt* that, either invited by their leiſure, or (which *Lucretius* thinks more probable) in imitation of *Birds*, began a *Tune.*

Through all the Woods they heard the charming Noiſe
Of chirping Birds, and try'd to frame their Voice,
And imitate. *Thus* Birds *inſtructed* Man,
And taught them Songs, *before their* Art *began.*

Lucretius alſo, in the ſame place, informs us, That *Shepherds* were firſt taught, by the ruſhing of ſoft *Breezes* amongſt the *Canes*, to blow their *Reeds*, and ſo by degrees to put their *Songs* in tune.

And

And whilſt ſoft Evening *Gales blew o're the Plains,*
And ſhook the ſounding *Reeds, they taught the Swains;*
And thus the Pipe *was fram'd, and tuneful Reed;*
And whilſt the tender Flocks ſecurely *feed,*
The harmleſs *Shepherds tun'd their* Pipes *to Love,*
And Amaryllis *ſounds in every Grove.*

Creech's Tranſlat. of *Lucret.* lib. v. pag. 182.

How *Verſe* firſt began, *Tibullus* plainly tells us, in thoſe Verſes tranſlated by Mr. *Creech*:

Firſt weary at his Plough, the lab'ring Hind
In certain Feet *his ruſtick Words did bind:*
His dry Reed firſt he tun'd at Sacred Feaſts
To thank the bounteous Gods, and chear his Gueſts.

From this Birth, as it were, of *Poetry*, *Verſe* began to grow up to greater Matters; for from the Common Diſcourſe of *Plough-men* and *Shepherds*, firſt *Comedy*, that Miſtreſs of a Private Life, next *Tragedy*, and then *Epick Poetry* aroſe. This *Maximus Tyrius* confirms in his Twenty firſt *Diſſertation*, where he tells us, That *Plough-Men* juſt coming from their Work, and ſcarce cleans'd from the filth of their Employment, did uſe to flurt out ſome ſudden and *extempore* Catches; and from this Beginning *Plays* were produc'd, and the *Stage* erected. But to return to the *Eglogue* or *Paſtoral.*

The *Eglogue*, ſays *Rapin*, is the moſt conſiderable of the little *Poems*; it is an Image of the Life of *Shepherds*. Therefore the Matter is low, and nothing Great is in the *Genius* of it; its buſineſs is to deſcribe the *Loves*, the *Sports*, the *Piques*, the *Jealouſies*, the *Diſputes*, the *Quarrels*, the *Intrigues*, the *Paſſions*, the *Adventures*, and

and all the little *Affairs* of *Shepherds*. So that its Character muſt be ſimple, the Wit eaſie, and the Expreſſion common; it muſt have nothing that is exquiſite, neither in the Thoughts, nor in the Words, nor in any *faſhions* of Speech; in which the *Italians*, who have writ in *this kind* of *Verſe*, have been miſtaken; for they always aim at being witty, and to ſay things too finely. The true Character of the *Eglogue*, ſays *Rapin*, is Simplicity and Modeſty; its Figures are ſweet, the Paſſions tender, the Motions eaſie; and though ſometimes it may be paſſionate, and have little Tranſports, and little Deſpairs, yet it never riſes ſo high as to be fierce or violent; its *Narrations* are ſhort, *Deſcriptions* little, the *Thoughts* ingenious, the *Manners* innocent, the *Language* pure, the *Verſe* flowing, the *Expreſſions* plain, and all the *Diſcourſe* natural; for this is not a great *Talker*, that loves to make a noiſe. The *Models* to be propoſed to write well in this ſort of *Poeſie*, are *Theocritus* and *Virgil*. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtotle *of* Poeſie, *Part* 2. *Sect.* xxvii.

Concerning Satyr.

IT is the Obſervation of Dr. *Tillotſon*, His preſent *Grace* of *Canterbury*, that *Satyr* and *Invective* are the eaſieſt kind of *Wit*. Almoſt any degree of it, *ſays he*, will ſerve to *abuſe* and *find fault*. For *Wit* is a keen Inſtrument, and every one can cut and gaſh with it; but to carve a beautiful Image, and to poliſh it, requires great Art and Dexterity. To *praiſe* any thing well, is an argument of much more *Wit*, than to *a-*

buſe.

buſe. A *little* Wit, and a *great deal* of ill Nature, will furniſh a Man for *Satyr*; but the greateſt Inſtance of *Wit* is to *commend well.* And perhaps, ſays *Tillotſon*, the *Beſt* Things are the *hardeſt* to be *duly commended.* For though there be a great deal of Matter to work upon, yet there is great Judgment requir'd to make choice. And where the Subject is great and excellent, it is hard not to ſink below the dignity of it. **Tillotſ.** 1. *Vol.* Serm. *pag.* 123.

Such is the mode of theſe Cenſorious days,
The Art is loſt of knowing how to Praiſe;
Poets *are envious now, and* Fools *alone*
Admire at Wit, *becauſe* themſelves *have none.*
Yet, whatſoe're is by vain Criticks *thought,*
Praiſing *is harder much, than* finding fault;
In homely Pieces *ev'n the* Dutch *excell,*
Italians *only can draw* Beauty *well.*

Earl of **Mulgr.** on *Hobbs*, ſee the *Poëticum Examen*, pag. 99.

Dr. *Barrow* tells us, It is not any Argument of conſiderable Ability in him that haps to pleaſe this way: a ſlender faculty will ſerve the turn. The ſharpneſs cometh not from *Wit* ſo much as from *Choler*, which furniſhes the loweſt Invention with a kind of pungent Expreſſion, and giveth an Edge to every ſpightful Word: So that any dull Wretch does ſeem to ſcold Eloquently and Ingeniouſly. Commonly (ſays *Barrow*) they who ſeem to excel this way, are miſerably flat in other diſcourſe, and moſt dully ſerious: they have a particular unaptneſs to Deſcribe any *Good* thing, or commend any worthy Perſon; being deſtitute of right *Idea's*, and proper terms anſwerable to ſuch purpoſes:

their Repreſentations of that kind are abſurd and unhandſome; their *Elogies* (to uſe their own way of ſpeaking) are in effect *Satyrs*, and they can hardly more *abuſe* a Man, than by attempting to *commend* him; like thoſe in the Prophet, who were *Wiſe to do ill, but to do well had no Knowledge.* **Barrow**'s 2*d* Serm. *againſt* Evil-ſpeaking, *pag.* 73, &c.

Dryden ſays, There has been a long Diſpute amongſt the *Modern Criticks*, whether the *Romans* deriv'd their *Satyr* from the *Grecians*, or firſt invented it themſelves. *Julius Scaliger*, and *Heinſius*, are of the *firſt* Opinion; *Caſaubon*, *Rigaltius*, *Dacier*, and the Publiſher of the *Dauphin's Juvenal*, maintain the *latter*. If (ſays *Dryden*) we take *Satyr* in the general Signification of the Word, as it is us'd in all Modern Languages, for an *Invective*, 'tis certain that it is almoſt as old as *Verſe*; and though *Hymns*, which are *Praiſes* of *God*, may be allow'd to have been before it, yet the *Defamation* of *others* was not long after it. After God had curs'd *Adam* and *Eve* in Paradiſe, the Husband and Wife excus'd themſelves, by laying the blame on one another; and gave a beginning to thoſe Conjugal Dialogues in *Proſe*, which the *Poets* have perfected in *Verſe*. The third Chapter in *Job* is one of the *firſt* Inſtances of this Poem in *Holy Scripture*: unleſs we will take it higher, from the latter end of the *Second*; where his Wife adviſes him to *curſe his Maker*.

This Original, I confeſs, ſays *Dryden*, is not much to the Honour of *Satyr*; but *here* it was *Nature*, and that *deprav'd*; When it became an *Art*, it bore better Fruit. **Dryd.** *in his* Dedic. *before* Juvenal, *pag.* 16.

Rapin remarks, That the Principal End of *Satyr*, is to inſtruct the People by diſcrediting *Vice*. It may therefore be of great advantage in a State, when taught to keep within its bounds. But as *Flatterers* embroil them-

themſelves with the *Publick*, whilſt they ſtrive too much to pleaſe *Particulars*; ſo (ſays *Rapin*) it happens, that the Writers of *Satyr* diſoblige ſometimes *Particulars*, whilſt they endeavour too much to pleaſe the *Publick*: and as downright *Praiſes* are too groſs; ſo *Satyr* that takes off the Mask, and reprehends *Vice* too openly, is not to be allow'd of: But though it be more difficult to *Praiſe*, than to *find fault*, becauſe it is eaſier to diſcover in People what may be turn'd into *Ridicule*, than to underſtand their *Merit*; 'tis requiſite notwithſtanding equally to have a *Wit* for the *one*, as for the *other*. For the ſame *Delicacies* of *Wit*, that is neceſſary to him who *praiſeth*, to purge his *Praiſes* from what is *deform'd*, is neceſſary to him who *findeth fault* to clear the *Satyr* from what is *bitter* in it. And this *Delicacy* which properly gives the reliſh to *Satyr*, was (ſays *Rapin*) heretofore the Character of *Horace*, for it was only by the way of *Jeſt* and *Merriment* that he exercis'd his *Cenſure*. For he knew full well, that the ſporting of *Wit*, hath more effect, than the ſtrongeſt Reaſons, and the moſt Sententious Diſcourſe, to render Vice *ridiculous*. In which *Juvenal*, with all his Serioufneſs, has ſo much ado to ſucceed. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtotle *of* Poeſie, *Part* 2. *Sect.* xxviii.

Lucilius *was the Man who bravely bold,*
To Roman *Vices did this* Mirror *hold,*
Protected humble Goodneſs from Reproach,
Show'd Worth on foot, and Raſcals in the Coach:
Horace *his pleaſing Wit to this did add,*
And none uncenſur'd could be Fool *or* Mad;
Unhappy was that Wretch, whoſe Name might be
Squar'd to the Rules of their ſharp Poetry.

Boileau's Art *of* Poetry, *pag.* 24.

When Shakeſpear, Johnſon, Fletcher, *rul'd the Stage,*
They took ſo bold a Freedom with the Age,
That there was ſcarce a Knave, *or* Fool, *in Town,*
Of any Note, but had his Picture *ſhown;*
And (without doubt) though ſome it may offend,
Nothing helps more than Satyr, *to amend*
Ill Manners, or is trulier Virtue's *Friend.*
Princes *may* Laws *Ordain,* Prieſts *gravely Preach,*
But Poets, *moſt ſucceſsfully will teach.*
For as a Paſſing-Bell, *frights from his* Meat,
The greedy Sick-man, *that too much wou'd eat;*
So when a Vice, *ridiculous is made,*
Our Neighbour's *ſhame keeps us from growing Bad.*

Earl of **Rochester** in Defence of *Satyr.*

Of all the Ways that Wiſeſt Men could find
To mend *the Age, and* mortifie *Mankind,*
Satyr *well writ has moſt ſucceſsful prov'd,*
And Cures, *becauſe the* Remedy *is* lov'd.
'Tis hard to write on ſuch a Subject more,
Without repeating Things ſaid oft before.
Some Vulgar Errors only we remove,
That ſtain a Beauty *which ſo much we love.*
*Of well-*choſe *Words ſome take not care enough,*
And think they ſhould be as the Subject rough;
This great Work muſt be more exactly made,
And ſharpeſt *Thoughts in* ſmootheſt *Words convey'd:*
Some think, if ſharp *enough, they cannot fail,*
As if their only Buſineſs was to rail;
But Human Frailty nicely *to unfold,*
Diſtinguiſhes a Satyr *from a* Scold.
Rage *you muſt hide, and* Prejudice *lay down,*
A Satyr's Smile *is* ſharper *than his* Frown;

So,

So, while you ſeem to ſlight *ſome Rival Youth*
Malice *it ſelf may paſs ſometimes for* Truth.

Mulgr. *Eſſay* on *Poetry.*

The *Author* of the *Preface* to *Valentinian* obſerves, That *Satyr*, that moſt needful part of our *Poetry*, has of late been more abus'd, and is grown more degenerate than any other; moſt commonly, like a Sword in the hands of a *Mad-man*, it runs a Tilt at all manner of Perſons, without any ſort of diſtinction or reaſon; and ſo ill-guided is this furious *Career*, that the *Thruſts* are moſt aim'd, where the *Enemy* is beſt arm'd. Womens Reputations (of what Quality or Conduct ſoever) have been reckon'd as lawful Game as Watchmens Heads; and 'tis thought as glorious a piece of *Gallantry* by ſome of our *Modern Sparks*, to libel a Woman of Honour, as to kill a Conſtable, who is doing his duty; *Juſtice* is not in their Natures, and all kind of *Uſeful Knowledge* lies out of the way of their Breeding; *Slander* therefore is their Wit, and *Dreſs* is their Learning; *Pleaſure* their Principle, and *Intereſt* their God.

Concerning Tragedy.

Rimer tells us, That Authors generally look no higher than *Theſpis* for the Original of *Tragedy*; yet *Plato* reckons it much ancienter. *Minos*, ſays he, for all his Wiſdom, was overſeen in making War upon *Athens*; where lived ſo many *Tragick Poets*, that repreſented him, and fixed on him and his Family a Name

and

and Character never to be wiped off. The *Judges of Hell*, *Paſiphae*, and her *Minotaur*, are upon record to all Poſterity.

All agree, ſays *Rimer*, that in the beginning *Tragedy* was purely a *Religious Worſhip*, and Solemn Service for their *Holy-days*. Afterwards it came from the *Temples* to the *Theatre*, admitted of a Secular allay, and grew to be ſome Image of the World, and Humane Life. When it was brought to the utmoſt perfection by *Sophocles*, the *Chorus* continued a neceſſary part of the *Tragedy*; but that *Muſick* and the *Dancing* which came along with the *Chorus*, were meer *Religion*, were no part of the *Tragedy*, nor had any thing of *Philoſophy* or *Inſtruction* in them.

The *Government* had the ſame care of theſe *Repreſentations*, as of their *Religion*, and as much caution about them. The Laws would not permit a private Perſon to make a Chappel, raiſe an Altar, or conſecrate an Image; otherwiſe all Places would in time be ſo cramm'd, from the Devotion of Women and weak Heads, that a Man ſhould not ſet a foot, nor find Elbow-room, for Gods, and Shrines, conſecrated Stuff. The like Providence had they (ſays *Rimer*) for the *Theatre*. No *Poet* under the Age of thirty or forty years was allow'd to preſent any Play to be acted. More of their Publick Money was ſpent about the *Chorus*, and other Charges and Decorations of their *Theatre*, than in all their Wars with the Kings of *Perſia*. And when brought to their laſt Extremity, that no other Bank remain'd for them, wherewith to carry on a War, without which War they could not longer expect to be a People, the delicate turn us'd by *Demoſthenes*, in ſtarting the Motion, for applying this *Theatre-Money* to the War, is obſerv'd as a Maſter-piece of Addreſs by the Orators. *Did I ſay* (quoth

Demo-

Demoſthenes) *the* Theatre-Money *may be applied to the War? no, by* Jove, *not I.*

Monaſteries and Church-lands were never with us ſo Sacred.

The *Romans*, ſays *Rimer*, were a rougher ſort of People; and wonderful jealous were they of the *Grecian Arts*, or of any Commerce with a Politer Nation. Till *Numa Pompilius*, very little had they of either *Religion* or *Poetry* among them. Nor made *He* uſe of it farther, than for the *Hymns* and *Anthems* at the Altars and Sacrifice: *Secular Poetry* had they none. And indeed at that time it was hardly ſafe for *Poetry* to ſtir from *Sanctuary*; for in the World, the rigid *Fathers* had given the *Poets* an ugly Name, calling them *Graſſatores*; which, in Modern *Italian*, may be rendred *Banditi.*

It was with much ado, and under an Uſurpation by the *Decemvirat*, that the *Romans* ſtooped to a Correſpondence with *Greece*, for the Commodity of their Laws; which were not till then imported; and from thence we hear of the *Twelve Tables.*

As for the *Stage-Plays*; it was a *Plague* that firſt introduced them. They try, by that ſtrange Worſhip, to appeaſe their *Gods*; and avert the Judgment ſo heavy on them. But their firſt *Secular Plays*, ſays *Rimer*, were taught by *Livius Andronicus*, ſome two hundred Years after the *Twelve Tables* at *Rome. He* ſet up for ſome skill in this *Dramatick* way, *Tranſlating* from the *Greek.*

After all the goodly Commendations and pretty things, by *Quintilian* acknowledg'd due to *Plautus* and *Terence*, frankly he concludes, *In Comædiâ maximè claudicamus—Vix levem conſequimur Umbram*; that *the* Roman *is infinitely ſhort of the* Greek *Comedy, hardly comes*

up

up to the ſhadow of it. *Horace* would fain with ſome colour make good the Compariſon betwixt the *Romans* and the *Greeks*, on that *Topick*, to flatter *Auguſtus*. But *Virgil*, with no diſadvantage to his Compliment, gave up the Cauſe.

Excudent alii——
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, *memento.*
Hæ tibi erunt Artes——

Let *them* have all the Praiſes due to their polite Learning: *To govern and to give Laws, be theſe thy Arts*, O Cæſar! This is thy Glory without a Rival.

Upon the whole, ſays *Rimer*; This *Dramatick Poetry* was like a *Forreign Plant* amongſt the *Romans*, the Climate not very kindly, and cultivated but indifferently; ſo might put forth Leaves and Bloſſoms, without yielding any Fruit of much Importance. *Athens* was the genuine *Soil* for it, *there* it took, *there* it flouriſh'd, and ran up to overtop every thing *Secular* and *Sacred*. *There* had this *Poetry* the Honour, the Pomps, and the Dignity; their *Regalia*, and their *Pontificalia*. But the *Romans* moſtly look'd no deeper than the Show. They took up with the *outſide* and *Portico*; their Genius dwelt in their Eye; there they fed it, there indulg'd and pamper'd it immoderately: So that their *Theatres* and their *Amphitheatres*, ſays *Rimer*, will always be remember'd, though their *Tragedy* and *Comedy* be only Shadow; or *Magni Nominis Umbra*. They reckon'd theſe Matters of *Wit* and *Speculation*, not ſo conſiſtent with the ſeverity of an Active Warlike People: Something of their old *Saturn* lay heavy in their heads to the very laſt. **Rimer**'s Short view of *Tragedy*, *chap.* 2.

Rapin

Rapin obſerves, That *Tragedy* of all parts of *Poeſie*, is that which *Ariſtotle* has moſt diſcuſs'd; and where he appears moſt exact. *Ariſtotle* alledges, that *Tragedy* is a *publick Lecture*, without compariſon more *inſtructive* than *Philoſophy*; becauſe it teaches the *Mind* by the Senſe, and rectifies the Paſſions by the Paſſions themſelves, in calming by their emotion the troubles they excite in the Heart. The Philoſopher had obſerv'd two important Faults in Man to be regulated, *Pride* and *Hard-Heartedneſs*; and he found for both theſe Vices a cure in *Tragedy*. For it makes Man modeſt, by repreſenting the great *Maſters of the Earth humbled*; and it makes him tender and merciful, by ſhewing him on the *Theatre* the ſtrange Accidents of Life, and the unforeſeen Diſgraces, to which thoſe of the higheſt Quality are ſubject. But becauſe *Man* is naturally timorous, and compaſſionate, he may fall into another Extream, to be either too fearful, or too full of pity; the too much Fear may ſhake the Conſtancy of Mind, and the too great Compaſſion may enfeeble the Equity. 'Tis the buſineſs of *Tragedy* to regulate theſe two Weakneſſes; it prepares and arms him againſt Diſgraces, by ſhewing them ſo frequent in the moſt conſiderable Perſons; and he ſhall ceaſe to fear *Ordinary* Accidents, when he ſees ſuch *Extraordinary* happen to the *Higheſt part* of Mankind. But as the End of *Tragedy* is to teach Men not to fear too weakly the Common Misfortunes, and to manage their fear; it ſerves alſo to teach them to ſpare their Compaſſion, for Objects that deſerve it. For there is an Injuſtice in being mov'd at the Afflictions of thoſe who deſerve to be miſerable. One may ſee without pity *Clytemneſtra* ſlain by her Son *Oreſtes* in *Æſchylus*, becauſe ſhe had cut the throat of *Agamemnon* her Husband; and one cannot ſee *Hippolytus*

die by the Plot of his Step-Mother *Phedra* in *Euripides*, without Compaſſion; becauſe he dy'd not but for being Chaſt and Vertuous. This, ſays *Rapin*, to me ſeems, in ſhort, the Deſign of *Tragedy*, according to the *Syſtem* of *Ariſtotle*, which to me appears admirable, but which has not been explain'd as it ought by his *Interpreters*, who (probably) did not well enough underſtand the Myſtery, to unfold it as they ought. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *of* Poeſie, *Part* 2. *Sect.* xvii.

Rapin does further remark, That the Faults of *Modern Tragedy* are ordinarily, that either the *Subjects* which are choſen are mean and frivolous; or the *Fable* is not well wrought, and the *Contrivance* not regular; Or that they are too much crowded with *Epiſodes*; Or that the *Characters* are not preſerv'd and ſuſtain'd; Or that the *Incidents* are not well prepar'd; Or that the *Machins* are forc'd; Or that, what is *admirable* fails in the *probability*; Or the *probability* is too plain and flat; Or that the *Surpriſes* are ill manag'd, the *Knots* ill ty'd, the *looſing* them not natural; the *Cataſtrophe's* precipitated; the *Thoughts* without Elevation; the *Expreſſions* without Majeſty; the *Figures* without Grace; the *Paſſions* without colour; the *Diſcourſe* without Life; the *Narrations* cold, the *Words* low, the *Language* improper; and all the *Beauties* falſe. They ſpeak not enough to the *heart* of the *Audience*, which is the only Art of the *Theatre*, where nothing can be delightful but that which moves the Affections, and which makes impreſſion on the Soul; little known is that *Rhetorick* which can lay open the *Paſſions* by all the natural degrees of their Birth, and of their *Progreſs*: Nor are thoſe *Morals* at all in uſe, which are proper to mingle thoſe *different Intereſts*, thoſe *oppoſite Glances*, thoſe *claſhing Maxims*, thoſe *Reaſons* that deſtroy each other,

to

to ground the Incertitudes and Irreſolutions, and to animate the *Theatre*. For the *Theatre* being eſſentially deſtin'd for *Action*, nothing ought to be idle, but all in agitation, by the thwarting of Paſſions that are founded on the different Intereſts that ariſe; or by the Embroilment that follows from the *Intrigue*. Likewiſe (ſays *Rapin*) there ought to appear no *Actor*, that carries not ſome deſign in his head, either to croſs the deſigns of others, or to ſupport his own; all ought to be in trouble, and no *Calm* to appear, till the *Action* be ended by the *Cataſtrophe*. Nor, finally, is it well underſtood, that it is not the admirable Intrigue, the ſurpriſing and wonderful Events, the extraordinary Incidents that make the Beauty of a *Tragedy*; it is the *Diſcourſes* when they are *Natural* and *Paſſionate*. *Sophocles* was not more ſucceſsful than *Euripides* on the *Theatre* at *Athens*, but by the *Diſcourſe*; though the *Tragedies* of *Euripides* have more of *Action*, of *Morality*, of wonderful *Incidents*, than thoſe of *Sophocles*. It is by theſe *Faults*, more or leſs great, that *Tragedy* in theſe days has ſo little effect on the Mind; that we no longer feel thoſe agreeable *Trances*, that make the pleaſure of the *Soul*; nor find thoſe *Suſpenſions*, thoſe *Raviſhments*, thoſe *Surpriſes*, thoſe *Admirations*, that the *ancient Tragedy* caus'd; becauſe the *Modern* has nothing of thoſe aſtoniſhing and terrible Objects that *affrighted*, whilſt they *pleas'd* the Spectators, and made thoſe great Impreſſions on the Soul, by the Miniſtry of the *Paſſions*. In theſe days Men go from the *Theatre* as little mov'd as when they went in, and carry their *Heart* along with them *untoucht*, as they brought it: So that the pleaſure they receive there, is become as Superficial, as that of *Comedy*; and our graveſt *Tragedies* are (to ſpeak properly) no more but *Heightened Comedies*. *Ibidem*, Sect. *xxi.*

At first the Tragedy *was void of Art;*
A Song; where each Man Danc'd, and Sung his Part,
And of God Bacchus *roaring out the Praise*
Sought a good Vintage *for their Jolly days:*
Then Wine, and Joy, were seen in each Man's Eyes,
And a fat Goat *was the best* Singer's *prize.*
Thespis *was first, who, all besmear'd with Lee,*
Began this pleasure for Posterity:
And, with his Carted Actors, *and a Song,*
Amus'd the People as he pass'd along.
Next, Æschylus *the diff'rent Persons plac'd,*
And with a better Masque his Players grac'd:
Upon a Theatre *his Verse express'd,*
And show'd his Hero with a Buskin dress'd.
Then Sophocles, *the Genius of his Age,*
Increas'd the Pomp, and Beauty of the Stage,
Ingag'd the Chorus *Song in every part,*
And polish'd rugged Verse by Rules of Art:
He, *in the* Greek, *did those Perfections gain,*
Which the weak Latin *never could attain.*
Our Pious Fathers, in their Priest-rid *Age,*
As impious, and prophane, abhorr'd the Stage:
A Troop of silly Pilgrims, *as 'tis said,*
Foolishly Zealous, scandalously Play'd
(*Instead of Heroes, and of Love's Complaints*)
The Angels, God, the Virgin, and the Saints.
At last, right Reason did his Laws reveal,
And show'd the Folly of their ill-plac'd Zeal,
Silenc'd those Nonconformists *of the Age,*
And rais'd the lawful Heroes of the Stage:
Only th' Athenian Masque *was laid aside,*
And Chorus *by the Musick was supply'd.*

Inge-

Ingenious Love, inventive in new Arts,
Mingled in Plays, and quickly touch'd our Hearts:
This Paſſion never could reſiſtance find,
But knows the ſhorteſt Paſſage to the Mind.

Boileau's Art of *Poetry*, pag. 32, 33, 34.

Rimer ſays, The *Chorus* was the Root and Original, and is certainly always the moſt neceſſary Part of *Tragedy*; that the *Spectators* thereby are ſecured, that their *Poet* ſhall not juggle, or put upon them in the matter of *Place*, and *Time*, other than is juſt and reaſonable for the Repreſentation. And the *Poet*, ſays *Rimer*, has this benefit; the *Chorus* is a goodly Show, ſo that he need not ramble from his Subject out of his Wits for ſome Foreign Toy or Hobby-Horſe, to humour the Multitude. *Ariſtotle*, in his *Poëtica*, tells us of *two Senſes* that muſt be pleas'd, our *Sight*, and our *Ears*; And, ſays *Rimer*, it is in vain for a *Poet* (with *Bays* in the *Rehearſal*) to complain of Injuſtice, and the wrong Judgment in his *Audience*, unleſs theſe *two Senſes* be gratified. **Rimer**'s Short View of *Tragedy*, *Chap.* I.

But *Dryden* ſeems to be of another Opinion, in relation to the *Chorus*; For (*ſays he*) if the *Engliſh Poets* have not yet brought the *Drama* to an abſolute perfection, yet at leaſt we have carried it much farther than thoſe *ancient Greeks*, *Æſchylus*, *Euripides* and *Sophocles*; who beginning from a *Chorus*, cou'd never totally exclude it, as we have done, who find it an unprofitable Incumbrance, without any neceſſity of entertaining it amongſt us; and without the poſſibility of Eſtabliſhing it *here*, unleſs it were ſupported by a Publick Charge. **Dryd.** Dedic. *before his* Examen Poëticum.

Con-

Concerning Comedy.

MOnſieur *Hedelin*, Abbot of *Aubignac*, tells us, That as for *Comedy*, *Donatus* ſeems to think it was invented by *Shepherds* and Country People, who us'd to dance about the Altars of *Apollo*, Sirnamed *Nomian*, and ſing at the ſame time ſome *Hymns* in honour of him; But, ſays *Hedelin*, I had rather believe *Athenæus*, who makes it take its Riſe with *Tragedy*, and that they were both conſecrated to *Bacchus*, and not to *Apollo*: Except *Donatus* would judge of all *Theatral* Actions by the *Apollinary* Games, which indeed were *Scenick*, and celebrated to the Honour of *Apollo*. In fine, *Hedelin* concludes, That *Comedy* and *Tragedy* were born together; and accordingly we find in *Clemens Alexandrinus*, that the Invention of *Comedy* was attributed to one *Siſarion* of *Tearia*; it may be, ſays *Hedelin*, becauſe he was the *firſt* that compos'd the *Hymns* of *Bacchus*, after the Sacrifice of the *Goat* by *Icarius*. And this, ſays *Hedelin*, may ſuffice to appeaſe the Quarrels of the Learned upon the Origine of *Comedy*, ſince they are not agreed neither in Times, Places, nor Perſons. **Hedelin's** Art *of the* Stage, *Book the 4th, Chap. 2.*

Monſieur *Hedelin* does farther obſerve, That *Comedy* has not the ſame Progreſs with *Tragedy*, it being long detain'd in Confuſion and Diſorder: Nay, even in *Ariſtophanes's* time, which was after *Sophocles* and *Euripides*, it was full of Satyrical Reflections, and Scandalous Slanders. It will (ſays *Hedelin*) be hard for us to mark the degrees of its progreſs, from the time that it was

a *Rural Hymn*, to that of its perfection upon the Stage; becauſe, as *Ariſtotle* ſays, *It being not ſo Noble as* Tragedy, *there has been leſs care to make Obſervations upon it; and the Magiſtrates were a great while before they concern'd themſelves in giving the* Chorus's, *but us'd to leave them to the Diſcretion of thoſe who made the* Comedy. Nevertheleſs, ſays *Hedelin*, if I may venture to bring to light things buried in ſo long an Obſcurity, I think that it begun to have *Actors* about the ſame time as *Tragedy* did, that is, under *Epicharmus*, the *Sicilian*, the Contemporary of *Theſpis*; and before that time I have not obſerv'd any Speakers. And 'tis from this, that the *Sicilians* do maintain, That *Comedy* was invented at *Syracuſa*, becauſe *Epicharmus* was that Country-man: not that they can pretend that there was no *Comedy* before him, (for we have yet the Fragments of *Alcæa*, a Comedy two Hundred years before his time) but becauſe *He* firſt introduc'd an *Actor* with the *Chorus*. We may ſay as much of *Sannyrion*, who was the *firſt* that added *Masks* and *Buffoons*, according to *Athenæus*; and the ſame of *Cratinus*, who ſettled *three Actors*, and made the whole Compoſition regular; the ſame of *Ariſtophanes*, who gave *Comedy* a further perfection; And ſo of all thoſe whom *Diomedes* calls the firſt *Comick* Poets, though they came a great while after *Comedy* was invented. **Hedelin** *ibid.*

Comedy, ſays *Rapin*, is an Image of Common Life; its end is to ſhew on the Stage the faults of *Particulars*, in order to amend the faults of the *Publick*, and to correct the People through a fear of being render'd *Ridiculous*. So that which is moſt proper to excite Laughter, is that which is moſt eſſential to *Comedy*. That pleaſant *turn*, that *Gayety* which can ſuſtain the

delicacy

delicacy of his *Character*, without falling into *Coldneſs*, nor into *Buffoonry*; that *fine Raillery*, which is the Flower of Wit, is the Talent which *Comedy* demands: but it muſt always be obſerv'd, that the *Ridiculing* part, for the Entertainment on the *Theatre*, ought to be no other but the Copy of the *Ridiculous* that is found in *Nature*. *Comedy* is as it ſhould be, when the *Spectator* believes himſelf really in the Company of ſuch Perſons as he has repreſented, and takes himſelf to be in a Family whilſt he is at the *Theatre*; and that he *there* ſees nothing but what he ſees in the World. For *Comedy*, ſays *Rapin*, is worth nothing at all, unleſs he know, and can compare the *Manners* that are exhibited on the Stage, with thoſe of ſuch Perſons, as he has Converſation withal. 'Twas by this, that *Menander* had ſo great Succeſs amongſt the *Grecians*; and the *Romans* thought themſelves in *Converſation*, whilſt they ſat beholding the *Comedies* of *Terence*; for they perceiv'd nothing but what they had been accuſtomed to find in ordinary Companies. 'Tis the great Art of *Comedy* to keep cloſe to *Nature*, and never leave it; to have common Thoughts and Expreſſions fitted to the Capacity of all the World: For, ſays *Rapin*, it is moſt certainly true, that the moſt groſs ſtrokes of *Nature*, whatever they be, pleaſe always more, than the moſt delicate, that are not *Natural*: nevertheleſs Baſe and Vulgar Terms are not to be permitted on the *Theatre*, unleſs ſupported by ſome kind of *Wit*. The *Proverbs* and *Wiſe Sayings* of the *People* ought not to be ſuffer'd, unleſs they have ſome pleaſant Meaning, and unleſs they are *Natural*. This is the moſt general Principle of *Comedy*; by which, whatever is repreſented, cannot fail to pleaſe; but without it, nothing can. 'Tis only by adhering to *Nature*, that the *Probability* can be maintain'd,

tain'd, which is the ſole Infallible Guide, that may be follow'd on the *Theatre*. Without *Probability* all is lame and faulty, *with* it all goes well: none can run aſtray who follow it; and the moſt ordinary faults of *Comedy* happen from thence, that the *Decencies* are not well obſerv'd, nor the *Incidents* enough prepar'd. 'Tis likewiſe neceſſary to take heed that the *Colours* employ'd to prepare the *Incidents*, be not too groſs, to leave to the *Spectator* the pleaſure of finding out himſelf what they ſignifie. But the moſt ordinary Weakneſs of our *Comedies* is the *Unravelling*; ſcarce ever any, ſays *Rapin*, ſucceed well in that, by the difficulty there is in *untying* happily that Knot which had been tyed. It is eaſie to *wind* up an Intrigue, 'tis only the work of *Fancy*; but the *unravelling* is the pure and perfect Work of the *Judgment*. 'Tis this that makes the Succeſs difficult, and if one would thereon make a little Reflection, he might find, that the moſt Univerſal fault of *Comedies*, is, that the *Cataſtrophe* of it is not *Natural*. It remains to examine, whether in *Comedy* the Images may be drawn greater than the Natural, the more to move the Minds of the Spectators, by more ſhining Portracts, and by ſtronger Impreſſions? that is to ſay, whether a *Poet* may make a *Miſer*, more Covetous; a *Moroſe* Man, more moroſe and troubleſome than the Original? To which *Rapin* anſwers, That *Plautus*, who ſtudied to pleaſe the *Common People*, made them ſo, but *Terence*, who would pleaſe the *better ſort*, confin'd himſelf within the Bounds of *Nature*, and *he* repreſented Vices, without making them either better or worſe. **Rapin** *Reflex. on* Ariſt. *of* Poeſie, *Part* 2. *Sect.* XXV.

Dryden tells us, That he values not a Reputation gain'd from *Comedy*; and that he thinks it, in its

own nature inferiour to all ſorts of *Dramatick* writing. *He ſays*, Low *Comedy* eſpecially requires, on the Writers part, much of Converſation with the *Vulgar*, and much of ill Nature in the Obſervation of their Follies. **Dryd.** *Pref. to the* Mock-Aſtrologer.

But in another place, *He* tells us how difficult it is to write *Comedy* well:

Of all Dramatick *Writing*, Comick *Wit*,
As 'tis the beſt; ſo 'tis moſt hard to hit.
For it lies all in level to the Eye,
Where all may judge, and each defect may ſpie.
Humour *is that which every day we meet,*
And therefore known as every publick Street;
In which, if e're the Poet *go aſtray,*
You all can point, 'twas there *he loſt his way.*
But, what's ſo common, to make pleaſant too,
Is more than any Wit *can always do,*
For 'tis, like Turks, *with* Hen *and* Rice *to treat;*
To make Regalio's *out of Common Meat.*

Dryd. *Epilogue* to the *Wild Gallant.*

Concerning the Epick, *or* Heroick *Poem.*

THe *Epick* Poem, ſays *Rapin*, is that which is the greateſt and moſt noble in *Poeſie*; it is the greateſt Work that Humane Wit is capable of. All the Nobleneſs, and all the Elevation of the moſt perfect *Genius*, can hardly ſuffice to form one ſuch as is requiſite for

for an *Heroick Poet*; the difficulty of finding together *Fancy* and *Judgment*, heat of *Imagination*, and Sobriety of *Reaſon*, *Precipitation* of Spirit, and *Solidity* of Mind, cauſes the rareneſs of this Character, and of this happy Temperament which makes a *Poet* accompliſh'd; it requires great *Images*, and yet a greater *Wit* to form them. *To conclude*, There muſt be a Judgment ſo ſolid, a Diſcernment ſo exquiſite, ſuch perfect Knowledge of the Language, in which he writes; ſuch obſtinate Study, profound Meditation, vaſt Capacity, that ſcarce whole Ages can produce one *Genius* fit for an *Epick* Poem. And, ſays *Rapin*, it is an Enterpriſe ſo bold, that it cannot fall into a Wiſe Man's Thoughts, but affright him. Yet how many *Poets* have we ſeen of late days, who, without *Capacity*, and without *Study*, have dar'd to undertake theſe ſort of *Poems*; having no other Foundation, but only the *heat* of their Imagination, and ſome *briskneſs* of Spirit. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *of* Poeſie, *Part* 2. *Sect.* 2.

By painful Steps we are at laſt got up
Parnaſſus *Hill, on whoſe bright Airy Top*
The Epick Poets *ſo Divinely ſhow,*
And with juſt Pride *behold the Reſt below.*
Heroick *Poems have a juſt pretence*
To be the utmoſt reach of Human Sence,
A Work of ſuch ineſtimable Worth,
There are but Two *the World has yet brought forth,*
Homer *and* Virgil *: with what awful Sound*
Do thoſe meer Words *the Ears of* Poets *wound!*
Juſt as a Changeling *ſeems below the Reſt*
Of Men, or rather is a two-legg'd Beaſt,
So theſe Gigantick *Souls amaz'd we find*
As much above the reſt of Human Kind.

Nature's *whole Strength* united! *Endleſs Fame,*
And Univerſal Shouts attend their Name.
Read Homer *once, and you can read no more,*
For all things elſe appear ſo dull and poor,
Verſe *will ſeem* Proſe, *yet often on him look,*
And you will hardly need *another Book.*

Mulgr. Eſſay on *Poetry.*

Sir *William Temple* tells us, That no Compoſition requires ſo many ſeveral Ingredients, or of more different ſorts, than the *Heroick* Poem; nor that to excel in any Qualities, there are neceſſary ſo many Gifts of Nature, and ſo many Improvements of Learning and of Art. For there muſt be an Univerſal *Genius*, of great Compaſs as well as great Elevation. There muſt be ſpritely Imagination or Fancy, fertile in a Thouſand Productions, ranging over infinite Ground, piercing into every Corner, and, by the light of that true *Poetical Fire*, diſcovering a thouſand little Bodies or Images in the World, and Similitudes among them, unſeen to common Eyes, and which could not be diſcover'd, without the Rays of that Sun.

Beſides the Heat of Invention, ſays Sir *William Temple*, and livelineſs of Wit, there muſt be the coldneſs of good Senſe, and ſoundneſs of Judgment, to diſtinguiſh between things and conceptions, which at firſt ſight, or upon ſhort glances, ſeem alike, to chooſe among infinite Productions of *Wit* and *Fancy*, which are worth preſerving and cultivating, and which are better ſtifled in the Birth, or thrown away when they are born, as not worth bringing up. Without the Forces of *Wit*, all *Poetry* is flat and languiſhing; and without the Succours of *Judgment*, 'tis wild and extravagant. The true Wonder of *Poeſie* is, That ſuch Contraries

muſt

muſt meet to compoſe it, a Genius both penetrating and ſolid; in Expreſſion both Delicacy and Force; and the Frame or Fabrick of a true *Poem*, muſt have ſomething both ſublime and juſt, amazing and agreeable. There muſt be a great Agitation of Mind to invent, a great Calm to judge and correct; there muſt be upon the ſame Tree, and at the ſame Time, both *Flower* and *Fruit*. To work up this Metal into exquiſite Figure, there muſt be employ'd the *Fire*, the *Hammer*, the *Chizel*, and the *File*. There muſt be a general Knowledge both of *Nature* and of *Arts*; and to go the loweſt that can be, there are required *Genius*, *Judgment*, and *Application*; for without *this laſt*, all the reſt will not ſerve turn, and none ever was a great *Poet*, that applied himſelf much to any thing elſe.

But, ſays Sir *William Temple*, when I ſpeak of *Poetry*, I mean not an *Ode* or an *Elegy*, a *Song* or a *Satyr*, nor by a *Poet* the *Compoſer* of any of *Theſe*, but of a *juſt Poem*; And after all I have ſaid, 'tis no wonder, there ſhould be ſo few have appeared, in any Parts or any Ages of the World, or that ſuch as have, ſhould be ſo much admir'd, and have almoſt *Divinity* aſcrib'd to them, and to their Works. **Temple**'s Eſſay *of* Poetry, *pag.* 15, 16, 17.

Dryden ſays, It is worth our conſideration, a little to examine how much the *Hypercriticks* of *Engliſh Poetry* differ, in their diſ-like of *Heroick Poetry*, from the Opinion of the *Greek* and *Latin* Judges of Antiquity; from the *Italians* and *French* who have ſucceeded them; and indeed, from the general taſte and approbation of all Ages. *Heroick Poetry*, ſays *Dryden*, which they contemn, has ever been eſteem'd, and ever will be, the greateſt Work of *Humane Nature*: In that rank has *Ariſtotle* plac'd it; and *Longinus* is ſo full of the

the like Expreſſions, That he abundantly confirms the others Teſtimony. *Horace* as plainly delivers his Opinion, and particularly praiſes *Homer* in theſe Verſes:

Trojani Belli Scriptorem, maxime lolli,
Dum tu declamas Romæ, Præneſte relegi:
Qui quid ſit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius ac melius Chryſippo & Crantore *dicit.*

And in another place, modeſtly excluding himſelf from the Number of *Poets*, becauſe he only writ *Odes* and *Satyrs*, he tells you a *Poet* is ſuch an one,

——*Cui mens Divinior, atque os*
Magna Sonaturum.

Quotations, ſays *Dryden*, are ſuperfluous in an Eſtabliſh'd Truth; otherwiſe I could reckon up amongſt the *Moderns*, all the *Italian* Commentators on *Ariſtotle's* Book of *Poetry*; amongſt the *French*, the greateſt in this Age, *Boileau* and *Rapin*: the *latter* of which is alone ſufficient, were all other *Criticks* loſt, to teach anew the Rules of Writing. Any Man, ſays *Dryden*, who will ſeriouſly conſider the nature of an *Epick* Poem, how it agrees with that of *Poetry* in general, which is to *inſtruct*, and to *delight*; what Actions it deſcribes, and what Perſons they are chiefly whom it informs; will find it a Work, which indeed is full of difficulty in the Attempt, but admirable when 'tis well perform'd. Dryd. *Apology for* Heroick Poetry.

Con-

Concerning the Elegy.

THe *Elegy*, ſays *Rapin*, by the quality of its name, is deſtin'd to *Tears* and *Complaints*: and therefore ought to be of a *doleful* Character. But afterwards it was us'd in ſubjects of Tenderneſs, as in *Love-Matters*, and the like. The *Latins* have been more ſucceſsful therein (by what appears to us) than the *Greeks*. For we have but little remaining of *Philetas* and *Tyrtæus*, who were famous in *Greece* for this kind of Verſe. They who have writ *Elegy* beſt amongſt the *Latins*, are *Tibullus*, *Propertius*, and *Ovid*. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *of* Poeſie, *Part* 2. *Sect.* xxix.

Soft Elegy, *deſign'd for Grief, and Tears,*
Was firſt *devis'd to grace ſome Mournful Hearſe:*
Since *to a brisker Note 'tis taught to move,*
And cloaths our gayeſt Paſſions, Joy *and* Love.
But, who was firſt Inventer of the Kind,
Criticks *have ſought, but never yet could find.*

Oldham, in Imitat. of *Horace's Art* of *Poetry*, pag. 8.

The Elegy, *that loves a mournful Stile,*
With unbound hair weeps at a Funeral Pile,
It paints the Lover's Torments, and Delights,
A Miſtreſs Flatters, Threatens, and Invites:
But well theſe Raptures if you'll make us ſee,
You muſt know Love, *as well as* Poetry.
I hate thoſe lukewarm Authors, whoſe forc'd Fire,
In a cold *Stile, deſcribes a* hot *Deſire,*

That

That ſigh by Rule, and raging in cold blood,
Their ſluggiſh Muſe whip to an Amorous mood:
Their feign'd Tranſports appear but flat and vain;
They always ſigh, and always hug their Chain,
Adore their Priſon, and their Suff'rings bleſs,
Make Senſe and Reaſon quarrel as they pleaſe.
'Twas not of Old *in this affected Tone*
That ſmooth Tibullus *made his Amorous moan;*
Nor Ovid, *when, inſtructed from above,*
By Nature's *Rules he taught the Art of* Love.

Boileau's Art *of* Poetry.

Their greateſt fault who in this kind have writ,
Is not defect in Words, nor want of Wit;
But ſhould this Muſe harmonious Numbers yield,
And every Couplet be with Fancy fill'd,
If yet a juſt Coherence *be not made*
Between each Thought, and the whole Model *laid*
So right, *that every* ſtep *may* higher *riſe,*
Like goodly Mountains, till they reach the Skies;
Trifles like ſuch perhaps of late have paſt,
And may be lik'd a while, but never laſt;
'Tis Epigram, *'tis Point, 'tis what you will,*
But not an Elegy, *nor writ with Skill,*
No * Panegyrick, *nor a* † Cooper's-Hill.

* *Waller's,* † *Denham's.*

Mulgr. *Eſſay* on *Poetry.*

Rapin tells us, That the *French* diſtinguiſh not their *Elegies* from *Heroick*; and that they call indifferently *Elegy*, what they pleaſe; whereby the diſtinction of the true Character of this Verſe ſeems not yet well eſtabliſh'd among them.

Concerning the Pindarique Ode.

Rapin remarks, That the *Ode* ought to have as much Nobleneſs, Elevation, and Tranſport, as the *Eglogue* has of Simplicity and Modeſty. 'Tis not only the *Wit* that heightens it, but likewiſe the *Matter*. For its uſe is to ſing the Praiſes of the *Gods*, and to celebrate the Illuſtrious Actions of *Great Men*; ſo it requires, to ſuſtain all the *Majeſty* of its Character, an exalted Nature, a great Wit, a daring Fancy, an Expreſſion Noble and Sparkling, yet pure and correct. All the briskneſs and life which Art has by its Figures, is not ſufficient to heighten *Ode* ſo far as its Character requires. But the reading alone of *Pindar*, ſays *Rapin*, is more capable to inſpire this *Genius*, than all my *Reflexions*. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *Treatiſe of* Poeſie, *Part* 2. *Sect.* xxx.

A higher flight, and of a happier Force
Are Odes, *the Muſes moſt unruly Horſe;*
That bounds ſo fierce, the Rider has no reſt,
But foams at Mouth, and moves like one poſſeſt.
The Poet *here muſt be indeed inſpired,*
With Fury *too, as well as* Fancy *fired.*
Cowley *might boaſt to have perform'd this Part,*
Had He *with* Nature *joyn'd the Rules of* Art;
But ill Expreſſion *gives ſometimes* Allay
To that rich *Fancy, which can ne're* decay:
Tho' all appear in Heat and Fury done,
The Language *ſtill muſt* ſoft *and* eaſie *run.*
Theſe Laws may ſeem a little too ſevere,
But Judgment *yields, and* Fancy *governs there;*

Which, though extravagant, this Muſe allows,
And makes the Work much eaſier than it ſhows.
Mulgr. Eſſay *on* Poetry.

Dryden obſerves to us, That the *Pindarique* Verſe allows more Latitude than any other. Every one, *ſays he*, knows it was introduc'd into our Language, in this Age, by the happy Genius of Mr. *Cowley*. The ſeeming eaſineſs of it, has made it ſpread; but it has not been conſider'd enough, to be ſo well cultivated. It languiſhes in almoſt every hand but *his*, and ſome *very few*, whom (ſays *Dryden*, to keep the reſt in Countenance) I do not name. *He*, indeed, has brought it as near perfection as was poſſible in ſo ſhort a time. But if, ſays *Dryden*, I may be allow'd to ſpeak my Mind modeſtly, and without injury to his Sacred Aſhes, ſomewhat of the Purity of *Engliſh*, ſomewhat of more equal Thoughts, ſomewhat of ſweetneſs in the *Numbers*, in one word, ſomewhat of a *finer turn* and more *Lyrical Verſe* is yet wanting. As for the Soul of it, which conſiſts in the Warmth and Vigor of Fancy, the Maſterly Figures, and the Copiouſneſs of Imagination, *He* has excell'd all others in this kind. Yet, ſays *Dryden*, if the Kind it ſelf be capable of more Perfection, though rather in the *Ornamental* parts of it, than the *Eſſential*, what Rules of Morality or reſpect have I broken, in naming the Defects, that they may hereafter be amended? *Imitation* is a nice point, and there are few *Poets* who deſerve to be *Models* in all they write. Since *Pindar* was the Prince of *Lyrick* Poets; let me, ſays *Dryden*, have leave to ſay, that in imitating *him*, our *Numbers* ſhou'd for the moſt part be *Lyrical*: for Variety, or rather where the Majeſty of the Thought requires it, they may be ſtretch'd to the *Engliſh Heroick* of five Feet, and

and to the *French Alexandrine* of six. But the *Ear* must preside, and direct the Judgment to the choice of *Numbers*: Without the Nicety of this, the Harmony of *Pindarique* Verse can never be compleat; the cadency of one Line must be a Rule to that of the next; and the sound of the former must slide gently into that which follows; without leaping from one Extream into another. It must be done like the *Shadowings* of a *Picture*, which fall by degrees into a darker Colour. I shall be glad, says *Dryden*, if I have so explain'd my self as to be understood, but if I have not, *quod nequeo dicere & sententio tantùm* must be my Excuse. There remains (says *Dryden*) much more to be said on this Subject; but to avoid envy, I will be silent: What I have said is the general Opinion of the best Judges, and in a manner has been forc'd from me, by seeing a noble sort of *Poetry* so happily restor'd by *one* Man, and so grosly Copied by almost *all the rest*: A *Musical Ear*, and a *great Genius*, if another Mr. *Cowley* cou'd arise, in another Age may bring it to perfection. **Dryd.** *Pref. to the 2d Part of* Poetical Miscellanies.

Mr. *Norris* says, That the *Pindarick* is the highest and most Magnificent kind of Writing in Verse, and consequently fit only for great and noble Subjects, such as are as *boundless* as its own *Numbers*: The nature of which is to be loose and free, and not to keep one settled pace, but sometimes like a gentle Stream to glide along peaceably within its own Channel, and sometimes, like an impetuous Torrent, to *roul* on extravagantly, and carry all before it. **Norris**'s Miscellan. *pag.* 8.

Dr. *Sprat* says, That if the *Pindarique* Verse be disgustful to any, by reason of the *Irregularity* of its *Numbers*, they may observe, that this very thing makes

that kind of *Poesie* fit for all manner of Subjects: for the *Pleasant*, the *Grave*, the *Amorous*, the *Heroick*, the *Philosophical*, the *Moral*, and the *Divine*. Besides this they will find, that the frequent alteration of the *Rhime* and *Feet*, affects the Mind with a more various delight, while it is soon apt to be tir'd by the settled pace of any one constant Measure. But that for which (says Dr. *Sprat*) I think this *inequality* of *Number* chiefly to be preferr'd, is its nearer affinity to *Prose*: from which all other Kinds of *English* Verse are so far distant, that it is very seldom found, that the same Man excels in both ways. But now this loose and *unconfin'd Measure*, has all the Grace and Harmony of the most *Confin'd*. And withal, it is so large and free, that the practice of it will only *exalt*, not *corrupt* our *Prose*: which is certainly the most useful kind of Writing of all others: for it is the Stile of all Business and Conversation. **Sprat** *in* Cowley's *Life*.

Cowley, in his Preface, tells us, That though the *Liberty* of *Pindarique* Verse, may incline a Man to believe it easie to be compos'd, yet the Undertaker will find it otherwise.

Horace, who propos'd the *Odes* of *Pindar* for the Model of those he writ in *Latin*, quitted immediately the *Numbers* and the *turn* of that Author's Verse, of which he found the *Latin* Tongue uncapable.

Concerning Songs *or* Sonnets, Madrigals, Rondelays, *&c.*

Rapin tells us, That the *Character* of the *ſmaller Verſe*, and of all the little Works of *Poetry*, requires that they be *Natural*, together with a *Delicacy*; for ſeeing the *little Subjects* afford no Beauty of themſelves, the Wit of the *Poet* muſt ſupply that want out of its own Stock. The *Sonnet*, ſays *Rapin*, is of a *Character* that may receive more of *Greatneſs* in its Expreſſion, than the other little Pieces; but nothing is more Eſſential to it, than the happy and natural *turn* of the *Thought* that compoſes it. Now, ſays *Rapin*, it is proper to know what this *Delicacy* is, that ought to be the *Character* of the *ſmaller Verſe*, or the little Works of *Poetry*, that ſo we may underſtand all that belongs to them. A *Word* may be *delicate* ſeveral ways; either by a *ſubtle Equivocation*, which contains a Myſtery in the Ambiguity; or by a *hidden Meaning*, which ſpeaks all out, whilſt it pretends to ſay nothing; or by ſome fierce and *bold Stroke* under Modeſt Terms; or by ſomething *brisk* and *pleaſant*, under a ſerious Air; or, laſtly, by ſome *fine Thought*, under a ſimple and homely Expreſſion. We find, ſays *Rapin*, all theſe ſorts of *Delicacy* in ſome of the *Ancients*, as in the *Socrates* of *Plato*, in *Sappho*, in *Theocritus*, in *Anacreon*, in *Horace*, in *Catullus*, in *Petronius*, and in *Martial*. Theſe are all great *Models* of this *Character*; of which the *French* have only in their Tongue *Marot*, Gentleman of the Bed-Chamber to *Francis* the *Firſt*. He had an admirable *Genius* for this way of Writing; and whoever have

have been ſucceſsful in it ſince, have only Copied him. *Voiture*, ſays *Rapin*, had a *Genius* for this *Character*; if he had not a little corrupted his Wit by the reading of the *Spaniards* and *Italians*. If theſe *Words* are *affected*, they loſe their Grace, becauſe they become cold and flat, when they are far-fetch'd. But the moſt general fault in theſe little Pieces of *Poetry*, is, when one would cram them with too much Wit. This is the ordinary Vice of the *Spaniards* and *Italians*, who labour always to *ſay things finely*. But this (ſays *Rapin*) is no very good Character; for they ceaſe to be *Natural*, whilſt they take care to be *Witty*. **Rap.** *Reflex.* &c. *Part* 2*d. Sect.* xxxii.

A faultleſs Sonnet, *finiſh'd well, would be*
Worth tedious Volumes of looſe Poetry.
A hundred Scribling Authors, without ground
Believe they have this only Phœnix *found:*
When yet th' exacteſt ſcarce have two or three
Among whole Tomes, from Faults and Cenſure free.
The reſt, but little read, regarded leſs,
Are ſhovel'd to the Paſtry *from the* Preſs.
Cloſing the Senſe within the meaſur'd time,
'Tis hard to fit the Reaſon *to the* Rhime.

Boileau's Art of *Poetry*, Engliſh'd by Sir *Will. Soame.*

Firſt then of Songs, *which now ſo much abound,*
Without his Song *no Fop is to be found,*
A moſt Offenſive Weapon which he draws
On all he meets againſt Apollo's *Laws:*
Tho' nothing ſeems more eaſie, yet no part
Of Poetry *requires a* nicer *Art;*

For

For as in rows of richeſt *Pearl there lies*
Many a Blemiſh that eſcapes our Eyes,
The leaſt of which Defects is plainly ſhown
In ſome ſmall Ring, *and brings the Value down;*
So Songs *ſhould be to juſt Perfection wrought;*
Yet where can we ſee one without a fault;
Exact Propriety *of Words and Thought?*
Expreſſion *eaſie, and the* Fancy *high,*
Yet that *not ſeem to* creep, *nor* this *to* fly;
No Words tranſpos'd, *but in ſuch* Order *all,*
As, tho' hard wrought, *may ſeem by chance to fall.*
Here, *as in all things elſe, is moſt unfit*
Bare Ribaldry, *that poor Pretence to Wit.*
Not that warm Thoughts of the tranſporting Joy,
Can ſhock the Chaſteſt, *or the* niceſt *Cloy;*
But Obſcene *Words, too groſs to move Deſire,*
Like heaps of Fewel do but choak *the Fire.*

Vulgr. Eſſay *on* Poetry.

Concerning the Epigram.

Rapin remarks, That the *Epigram*, of all the Works in Verſe that Antiquity has produc'd, is the leaſt conſiderable, yet *this* too has its Beauty. This Beauty conſiſts either in the delicate *turn*, or in a *lucky Word*. The *Greeks* have underſtood this ſort of *Poeſie* otherwiſe than the *Latins*. The *Greek Epigram* runs upon the *turn* of a Thought that is natural, but fine and ſubtle. The *Latin Epigram*, by a falſe *taſte* that ſway'd in the beginning of the decay of the pure *Latin* Stile, endeavours

vours to ſurpriſe the Mind by ſome *nipping Word*, which is call'd a *Point*. *Catullus* writ after the former manner, which is of a *finer* Character; for he endeavours to cloſe a Natural Thought within a delicate *turn* of Words, and within the Simplicity of a very ſoft Expreſſion. *Martial*, ſays *Rapin*, was in ſome manner the Author of this other way, that is to ſay, to terminate an ordinary thought by ſome *Word* that is *ſurpriſing*. After all, Men of a good taſte, preferr'd the way of *Catullus*, before that of *Martial*; there being more of true delicacy in *that*, than in *this*. And in theſe latter Ages, ſays *Rapin*, we have ſeen a Noble *Venetian*, named *Andreas Naugerius*, who had an exquiſite diſcernment, and who, by a natural *Antipathy* againſt all that which is called *Point*, which he judg'd to be of an ill reliſh, Sacrific'd every year in Ceremony a Volume of *Martial's Epigrams* to the *Manes* of *Catullus*, in Honour to his Character, which he judg'd was to be preferr'd to that of *Martial*. In concluſion, *Rapin* tells us, that the *Epigram* is a ſort of *Verſe*, in which a Man has little Succeſs; for it is a meer *lucky hit*, if it prove well; and an *Epigram*, unleſs it be admirable, is little worth; and it is ſo rare to make them *admirable*, that 'tis well if a Man can make one in his whole life time. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *Treatiſe of* Poeſie, *Part* 2. *Sect.* xxxi.

The Epigram, *with little Art compos'd,*
Is one good Sentence in a Diſtich *clos'd.*
Theſe Points, *that by* Italians *firſt were priz'd,*
Our Ancient Authors knew not, or deſpis'd.

Boileau's Art of *Poetry*, pag 21.

Sir *William Temple* ſays, There were (indeed) certain *Fairies* in the old Regions of *Poetry*, called *Epigrams*, which

which ſeldom reached above the Stature of Two, or Four, or Six Lines, and which being ſo ſhort, were all turned upon *Conceit*, or ſome ſharp Hits of Fancy or Wit. The only Ancient of this kind among the *Latins*, were the *Priapeia*, which were little *Voluntaries* or *Extemporaries*, written upon the ridiculous Wooden Statues of *Priapus*, among the Gardens of *Rome*. In the decays of the *Roman* Learning and Wit, as well as Language; *Martial*, *Auſonius*, and others, fell into this Vein, and applied it indifferently to *all* Subjects which was before Reſtrained to *one*, and dreſt it ſomething more cleanly than it was Born. This Vein of *Conceit*, ſays *Temple*, ſeem'd proper for ſuch *Scraps* or *Splinters*, into which *Poetry* was broken, and was ſo eagerly followed, as almoſt to over-run all that was compoſed in our ſeveral Modern Languages; The *Italian*, the *French*, the *Spaniſh* as well as *Engliſh*, were for a great while full of nothing elſe but *Conceit*: It was an Ingredient, that gave taſte to Compoſitions which had little of themſelves; 'twas a Sauce that gave Point to Meat that was flat, and ſome Life to Colours that were fading; And in ſhort, Thoſe who could not furniſh *Spirit*, ſupplied it with this *Salt*, which may preſerve Things or Bodies that are Dead; but is for ought I know, of little uſe to the Living, or neceſſary to Meats that have much or pleaſing Taſtes of their own. However it were, this Vein firſt over-flow'd our Modern *Poetry*, and with ſo little diſtinction, or judgment, that we would have *Conceit* as well as *Rhime* in every two Lines, and run through all our long Scribbles as well as the Short, and the whole Body of the Poem, whatever it is: This was juſt as if a Building ſhould be nothing but Ornament, or Cloaths nothing but

Trimming; as if a Face ſhould be cover'd over with black Patches, or a Gown with Spangles, which is all I ſhall ſay of it. **Temple**'s *Eſſay of* Poetry, *pag.* 48, 49.

Concerning Burleſque.

SIr *William Temple* obſerves to us, That one Vein which has enter'd and helpt to corrupt our Modern *Poeſie*, is that of *Ridicule*, as if nothing pleas'd but what made one laugh; which yet comes from two very different Affections of the Mind; for as Men have no diſpoſition to laugh at things they are moſt pleas'd with, ſo they are very little pleas'd with many things they laugh at. But this miſtake is very general, and ſuch Modern *Poets*, as found no better way of pleaſing, thought they could not fail of it, by *Ridiculing*. This was encourag'd by finding Converſation run ſo much into the ſame Vein, and the Wits in Vogue to take up with that part of it, which was formerly left to thoſe that were call'd *Fools*, and were uſed in great Families, only to make the Company laugh. What Opinion the *Romans* had of this Character, appears in thoſe Lines of *Horace*:

——*Abſentem qui rodit amicum,*
Qui non defendit alio culpante, Solutos
Qui captat riſus Hominum, famamq; dicacis,
Fingere qui non viſa poteſt, Commiſſa tacere
Qui nequit, Hic Niger eſt, Hunc tu Romane *Caveto.*

And

And 'tis pity, ſays *Temple*, the *Character* of a *Wit*, in *one* Age, ſhould be ſo like that of a *Black* in *another*.

This Vein of *Burleſque*, or *Ridiculing*, began firſt in Verſe, with an *Italian* Poem, called *La Secchia Rapita*, was purſued by *Scarron* in *French*, with his *Virgil Traveſty*, and in *Engliſh* by Sir *John Mince*, *Hudibras*, and *Cotton*, and with greater height of *Burleſque* in the *Engliſh*, than I think in any other Language. But (ſays Sir *William Temple*) let the Execution, be what it will, the Deſign, the Cuſtom, and Example are very pernicions to *Poetry*, and indeed, to all Virtue and good Qualities among Men, which muſt be diſhearten'd, by finding how unjuſtly and undiſtinguiſh'd they fall under the laſh of *Raillery*, and this Vein of *Ridiculing* the Good as well as the Ill, the Guilty and the Innocent together. 'Tis a very poor, though common pretence to *Merit*, to make it appear by the Faults of other Men. A mean Wit or Beauty may paſs in a Room, where the reſt of the Company are allowed to have none; 'tis ſomething to ſparkle among *Diamonds*; but to ſhine among *Pebbles*, is neither Credit nor Value worth the pretending. Sir **Will. Temple**'s Eſſay *of* Poetry, *pag.* 49, &c.

The dull Burleſque *appear'd with impudence,*
And pleas'd by Novelty, in ſpite of Sence.
All, except trivial Points, grew out of date;
Parnaſſus *ſpoke the Cant of* Belinsgate:
Boundleſs and Mad, diſorder'd Rhime *was ſeen:*
Diſguis'd Apollo *chang'd to* Harlequin.
This Plague, which firſt in Country Towns began,
Cities and Kingdoms quickly over-ran;
The dulleſt Scriblers ſome Admirers found,
And the Mock-Tempeſt *was a while renown'd:*

But this low Stuff the Town *at laſt deſpis'd,*
And ſcorn'd the Folly that they once had priz'd;
Diſtinguiſh'd Dull, from Natural and Plain,
And left the Villages *to* Fleckno's *Reign.*
Let not ſo mean a Stile your Muſe debaſe;
But learn from Butler *the Buffooning Grace:*
And let Burleſque *in Ballads be employ'd;*
Yet noiſie Bumbaſt *carefully avoid.*

Botleau's Art *of* Poetry, *pag.* 5, 6.

Rimer tells us, That among the *French*, not many years ſince, was obſerv'd a moſt vicious Appetite, and immoderate Paſſion for *Burleſque*. Which ſort of Verſe had been currant in *Italy* an Hundred years, before e're they paſs'd to this ſide the *Alps*; but when once they had their turn in *France*, ſo right to their humour, they over-ran all; nothing Wiſe or Sober could ſtand in their way. All were poſſeſs'd with the Spirit of *Burleſque*, from *Doll* in the Dairy, to the Matrons at Court, and Maids of Honour. Nay, ſays *Rimer*, ſo far went the *Frenzy*, that no Bookſeller would meddle on any terms without *Burleſque*; inſomuch that *Ann.* 1649, was at *Paris* Printed a ſerious Treatiſe with this Title,

——*La Paſſion de noſtre Seigneur, En vers* Burleſques.

Rimer's Short view of *Tragedy*, Chap. 1.

The *Burleſque* Verſe, conſiſting of Eight Syllables or Four Feet, is that which our Excellent *Hudibras* has choſen. The worth of his Poem, ſays *Dryden*, is too well known to need my Commendation, and he is above my Cenſure: His *Satyr* is of the *Varronian* kind, though

though unmix'd with *Proſe*. The choice of his *Numbers* is ſuitable enough to his Deſign, as *he* has manag'd it. But in any other Hand, the ſhortneſs of his Verſe, and the quick returns of Rhime, ſays *Dryden*, had debas'd the Dignity of Stile. And beſides, the double Rhime (a neceſſary Companion of *Burleſque* writing) is not ſo proper for Manly *Satyr*, for it turns *earneſt* too much to *Jeſt*, and gives us a Boyiſh kind of Pleaſure. It tickles awkardly, with a kind of pain, to the beſt ſort of Readers; we are pleas'd ungratefully, and, if I may ſay ſo, againſt our liking. We thank him not for giving us that unſeaſonable Delight, when we know he cou'd have given us a better, and more ſolid. He might have left that Task to others, who not being able to put in Thought, can only make us grin with the Excreſcence of a Word of two or three Syllables in the cloſe. 'Tis indeed, ſays *Dryden*, below ſo great a Maſter to make uſe of ſuch a little Inſtrument. But his good Senſe is perpetually ſhining through all he writes; it affords us not the time of finding Faults: We paſs through the levity of his *Rhime*, and are immediately carried into ſome admirable uſeful Thought. After all, ſays *Dryden*, he has choſen *this kind* of *Verſe*; and has written the beſt in it: And had he taken another, *he* would always have excell'd.

Dryden does here alſo declare, That for his part, he prefers the Verſe of *Ten Syllables*, which we call the *Engliſh Heroique*, to that of *Eight*. For, *ſays he*, this ſort of *Number* is more Roomy. The Thought can turn it ſelf with greater eaſe, in a larger compaſs. When the *Rhime* comes too thick upon us, it ſtreightens the Expreſſion; we are thinking of the cloſe, when we ſhould be employ'd in adorning the Thought. It makes a *Poet* giddy with turning in a Space too narrow for his Imagination. He loſes many Beauties without

without gaining one Advantage; for, ſays *Dryden*, a *Burleſque Rhime*, I have already concluded to be none; or if it were, 'tis more eaſily purchas'd in *Ten Syllables*, than in *Eight:* In both Occaſions, ſays *Dryden*, 'tis as in a *Tennis-Court*, where the ſtrokes of greater force are given, when we ſtrike out, and play at length. *Taſſone* and *Boileau* have left us the beſt Examples of this way, in the *Secchia Rapita*, and the *Lutrin*. And next them, *Merlin Coccajus* in his *Baldus*. **Dryd.** *Dedic. before the* Tranſlat. *of* Juvenal, *pag.* 48, 49.

The Grace and Beauties of *Burleſque* do chiefly conſiſt in a diſproportion between the *Stile* in which we ſpeak of a thing, and its true *Idea:* This is the diſtinguiſhing Mark of *French* and *Italian Burleſque*, of which there ſeems to be two ſorts; as when low and mean Expreſſions are us'd to repreſent the greateſt Events, as in *Scarron's Virgil-Traveſty*; or great and loſty Terms to deſcribe Common Things, as in *Boileau's Lutrin*, and *Taſſone's Secchia Rapita*. Good Senſe and Manners ought to be preſerv'd, or *Burleſque* dwindles to Buffoonry, and the Dialect of the *Mob*. As for the way of deſcribing ſmall things in pompous terms, though it admits of more Senſe and fine Expreſſions, and is alſo for ſome time pleaſant to the Reader, by the Air of Gravity and ridiculous Affectation, with which Trifles are related as mighty Matters; yet, ſays my *Author*, he ſoon grows weary with it, as with moſt long-winded Poems; and if any will read over *Taſſone*, though ſome things will extreamly delight him, I doubt not, ſays the *ſame Author*, but that he will find this true. **Pet. Motteux** *in the* Gentlem. Journ. *January*, 169⅔.

Con-

Concerning Lampoons.

Dryden remarks, That that ſort of *Satyr*, which is known in *England* by the name of *Lampoon*, is a dangerous ſort of Weapon, and for the moſt part unlawful. We have no Moral right on the Reputation of other Men. 'Tis taking from them, what we cannot reſtore to them. How remote (ſays *Dryden*) are for the moſt part theſe *Lampooners*, in common juſtice, from the choice of ſuch Perſons as are the proper Subject of *Satyr!* And how little Wit they bring, for the Support of their Injuſtice! The *weaker Sex* is their moſt Ordinary Theme: And the Beſt and Faireſt are ſure to be the moſt ſeverely handled. Amongſt *Men*, thoſe who are proſperouſly unjuſt, are intituled to a *Panegyrick*. But afflicted Virtue is inſolently ſtabb'd with all manner of Reproaches. No Decency is conſider'd, no Fulſomneſs omitted; no Venom is wanting, as far as Dullneſs can ſupply it. For there is a perpetual Dearth of Wit; a Barrenneſs of good Senſe and Entertainment. The neglect of the Readers, will ſoon put an end to this ſort of Scribling. There can be no Pleaſantry where there is no Wit: No Impreſſion can be made, where there is no Truth for the Foundation. **Dryd.** *Dedic. before the* Tranſlat. *of* Juvenal, *pag.* 35, 36.

Yet theſe *are Pearls to your* Lampooning *Rhimes,*
T' abuſe your ſelves *more dully than the* Times.
Scandal, *the Glory of the* Engliſh *Nation,*
Is worn to Raggs, and ſcribbl'd out of Faſhion.
Such harmleſs Thruſts, as if, like Fencers *wiſe,*
They had agreed their Play before their Prize:

Faith,

Faith, *they may hang their Harps upon the Willows,*
'Tis just like Children when they box with Pillows.
Dryd. in an Epilogue. See *Miscellan. Poems,* pag. 294.

Our Poet *has a different Taste of* Wit,
Nor will to common Vogue himself submit.
Let some admire the Fops, whose Talents lie
In venting dull insipid Blasphemy;
He *swears,* he *cannot with those Terms dispence,*
Nor will be damn'd *for the repute of* Sense.
Wit's *Name was never to Prophaneness due,*
For then you see he could be Witty *too:*
He could Lampoon *the State, and Libel Kings,*
But that he's Loyal, and knows better things,
Than Fame, whose guilty Birth from Treason springs.
He likes not Wit, *which can't a Licence claim,*
To which the Author dares not set his Name.
Wit *should be open, court each Reader's Eye,*
Not lurk in sly unprinted Privacy.
But Criminal Writers, like dull Birds of Night,
For Weakness, or for Shame, avoid the Light;
May such *a Jury for their Audience have,*
And from the Bench, *not* Pit, *their Doom receive.*
May they *the Tow'r for their due Merits share,*
And a just Wreath of Hemp, *not* Laurel *wear.*
Joh. Oldham, pag. 112. the 3*d Edition.*

I love sharp Satyr, *from Obsceneness free;*
Not Impudence, that Preaches Modesty:
Our English, *who in Malice never fail,*
Hence, in Lampoons *and Libels, learnt to Rail;*
Pleasant Detraction, *that by* Singing *goes*
From Mouth to Mouth, and as it Marches grows!

Our

Our freedom *in our* Poetry *we see,*
That Child *of* Joy, *begot by* Liberty.
Sir **Will. Soame**, in his Translat. of *Boileau's Art* of *Poetry*, pag. 25, 26.

Concerning the English Poetry; *and their* Language *in relation to* Poetry.

MR. *Rimer* can by no means allow of the reason, which Sir *Philip Sidney* gives, why *Poets* are less esteem'd in *England*, than in the other famous Nations, to be *want* of *Merit*: Nor is he of *their* Opinion, who say, that *Wit* and *Wine* are not of the growth of our Country. Valour they allow us; but what we gain by our *Arms*, we lose by the Weakness of our *Heads*: Our good *Ale*, and *English Beef*, they say, may make us *Souldiers*; but are no very good Friends to *Speculation*. But, says *Rimer*, were it proper here to handle this Argument, and to make Comparisons with our Neighbours, it might easily, by our *Poetry*, be evinc'd, that *our Wit* was never inferiour to *theirs*; though, perhaps, our *Honesty* made us *worse Politicians*. *Wit* and *Valour* have always gone together, and *Poetry* has been the Companion of *Camps*. The *Heroe* and *Poet* were inspir'd with the same *Enthusiasm*, acted with the same heat, and *Both* were crown'd with the same *Laurel*. Had our Tongue, says *Rimer*, been as generally known, and those who felt our blows, understood our Lan-

guage; they would confeſs, that our *Poets* had likewiſe done their part, and that our *Pens* had been as ſucceſsful as our *Swords.* And certainly, if Sir *Philip Sidney* had ſeen the *Poets*, who ſucceeded him, *he* would not have judg'd the *Engliſh* leſs deſerving than their Neighbours. **Rimer** *in the Preſ. to his* Tranſlat. *of* Rapin.

Above our Neighbours our Conceptions are,
But faultleſs Writing is th' Effect of Care.
Our Lines reform'd, and not compos'd in haſte;
Poliſht like Marble, wou'd like Marble laſt.
But as the preſent, *ſo the* laſt *Age writ;*
In both *we find like Negligence and Wit.*
Were we but leſs indulgent to our Faults,
And Patience had to cultivate our Thoughts;
Our Muſe would flouriſh, and a Nobler Rage
Would honour this, *than did the* Grecian *Stage.*

Edm. Waller's Prologue to the *Maids Tragedy.*

Rimer ſays, That he preſumes *Rapin* did not underſtand our Language well enough, to paſs a Judgment on the *Engliſh Poets*: only in general he confeſſes, that we have a *Genius* for *Tragedy* above all other People; One reaſon he gives, we cannot allow of, *viz. The diſpoſition of our Nation, which,* he ſaith, *is delighted with cruel things.* 'Tis ordinary, ſays *Rimer*, to judge of Peoples Manners and Inclinations, by their publick Diverſions; and therefore Travellers, who ſee ſome of our *Tragedies*, may indeed conclude us the cruelleſt minded People in *Chriſtendom.*

In another place *Rapin* ſays of us, That *we are Men in an Iſland, divided from the reſt of the World, and*

that

that we love Blood in our Sports. And, perhaps, says *Rimer*, it may be true, that on *our* Stage are more Murders, than on *all* the Theatres in *Europe.* And they who have not time to learn our Language, or be acquainted with our Converſation, may there in three hours time behold ſo much Bloodſhed, as may affright them from the *inhoſpitable Shore*, as from the *Cyclops Den.* Let our *Tragedy-Makers* then conſider this, and examine whether it be the Diſpoſition of the People, or their own *Caprice*, that brings this Cenſure on the beſt natur'd Nation under the Sun. **Rimer**'s *Pref. to the* Tranſlat. *of* Rapin.

Dryden tells us, He cannot grant, that the *French* Dramatick Writers excel the *Engliſh.* Our Authors, *ſays he*, as far ſurpaſs them in Genius, as our Souldiers excel theirs in Courage: 'Tis true, in Conduct they ſurpaſs us either way: Yet that proceeds not ſo much from their greater Knowledge, as from the difference of Taſts in the two Nations. *They* content themſelves with a thin Deſign, without Epiſodes, and manag'd by few Perſons. *Our* Audience will not be pleas'd, but with variety of Accidents, an Underplot, and many Actors. *They* follow the *Ancients* too ſervilely, in the Mechanick Rules, and *we* aſſume too much Licence to our ſelves, in keeping them only in view, at too great a diſtance. But, ſays *Dryden*, if our Audience had their Taſts, *our Poets* could more eaſily comply with them, than the *French* Writers cou'd come up to the Sublimity of *our* Thoughts, or to the difficult variety of our Deſigns. **Dryd.** *in his* Dedic. *before the* Examen Poëticum.

But who did ever in French Authors *ſee*
The Comprehenſive Engliſh Energy?

The weighty Bullion *of* one Sterling Line,
Drawn to French Wire, *would through* whole Pages *ſhine.*
I ſpeak my private, but impartial Senſe,
With Freedom, and (I hope) without Offence:
For I'le Recant, when France *can ſhew me* Wit,
As ſtrong as ours, *and as* ſuccinctly writ.
Roſcommon's Eſſay on *Tranſlated Verſe.*

Sir *William Temple* remarks, That among the many Decays of *Poetry*, there is yet one ſort, that ſeems to have ſucceeded much better with our Moderns, than any of the reſt, which is *Dramatick*, or that of the *Stage*: In this the *Italian*, the *Spaniſh*, and the *French*, have all had their different Merit, and received their juſt Applauſes. Yet I am deceiv'd, ſays *Temple*, if our *Engliſh* has not in ſome kind excell'd both the *Modern* and the *Ancient*; which has been by force of a *Vein* Natural perhaps to our Countrey, and which with us, is called *Humour*; a Word peculiar to our Language, and hard to be expreſs'd in any other; nor is it (that I know of) found in any Forreign Writers, unleſs it be *Moliere*, and yet *his* has too much of the *Farce*, to paſs for the ſame with *ours*. *Shakeſpear* was the firſt that open'd this *Vein* upon *our Stage*, which has run ſo freely and ſo pleaſantly ever ſince, that, ſays *Temple*, I have often wonder'd, to find it appear ſo little upon *any other*; being a Subject ſo proper for them, ſince *Humour* is but a Picture of particular Life, as *Comedy* is of general; and though it repreſents Diſpoſitions and Cuſtoms leſs Common, yet they are not leſs Natural than thoſe that are more frequent among Men; for if *Humour* it ſelf be forc'd, it loſes all the Grace; which has been indeed the fault of ſome of our *Poets* moſt celebrated in this Kind.

It may ſeem a Defect (ſays *Temple*) in the *Ancient Stage*, that the *Characters* introduc'd were ſo few, and thoſe ſo common, as a Covetous old Man, an Amorous young Man, a Witty Wench, a Crafty Slave, a Bragging Souldier: The Spectators met nothing upon the Stage, but what they met in the Streets, and at every Turn. All the *Variety* is drawn only from different and uncommon Events; whereas if the *Characters* are ſo too, the Diverſity and the Pleaſure muſt needs be the more. But as of moſt general Cuſtoms in a Country, there is uſually ſome Ground, from the Nature of the People or the Clymat, ſo there may be amongſt us, for this *Vein* of *our* Stage, and a greater *Variety* of *Humour* in the *Picture*, becauſe there is a greater *Variety* in the *Life*. This may proceed (ſays *Temple*) from the Native Plenty of our Soil, the unequalneſs of our Clymat, as well as the eaſe of our Government, and the Liberty of Profeſſing Opinions and Factions, which perhaps our Neighbours may have about them, but are forced to diſguiſe, and thereby they may come in time to be extinguiſh'd. Plenty begets Wantonneſs and Pride, Wantonneſs is apt to *Invent*, and Pride ſcorns to *Imitate*; Liberty begets Stomach or Heart, and Stomach will not be conſtrained. Thus we come to have more *Originals*, and more that appear what they are, we have more *Humour*, becauſe every Man follows his own, and takes a Pleaſure, perhaps a Pride, to ſhew it. On the contrary, where the People are generally Poor, and forced to hard Labour, their Actions and Lives are all of a piece; where they ſerve hard Maſters, they muſt follow his Examples as well as Commands, and are forced upon Imitation in ſmall Matters, as well as Obedience in great: So that ſome Nations look as if they were caſt all by one Mould,

or

or cut out all by one Pattern, (at leaſt the Common People in one, and the Gentlemen in another): They ſeem all of a ſort in their Habits, their Cuſtoms, and even their Talk and Converſation, as well as in the Application and Purſuit of their Actions and their Lives.

Beſides all this, there is another ſort of *Variety* amongſt us, which ariſes from our *Clymat*, and the Diſpoſitions it naturally produces. We are not only more unlike one another, than any Nation I know, ſays Sir *William Temple*, but we are more unlike our ſelves too, at ſeveral times, and owe to our very Air ſome ill Qualities, as well as many good: We may allow ſome Diſtempers incident to our *Clymat*, ſince ſo much Health, Vigour, and length of Life have been generally aſcribed to it; for among the *Greek* and *Roman* Authors themſelves, we ſhall find the *Britains* obſerv'd, to live the longeſt, and the *Ægytians* the ſhorteſt, of any Nations that were known in thoſe Ages. Beſides, I think, ſays *Temple*, none will diſpute the Native Courage of our Men, and Beauty of our Women, which may be elſewhere as great in *Particulars*, but no where ſo in *General*; they may be (what is ſaid of Diſeaſes) as *Acute* in other places, but with us they are *Epidemical*. For my own part, ſays Sir *William Temple*, I have converſed much with Men of other Nations, and ſuch as have been both in great Employments and Eſteem, and I can ſay very impartially, that I have not obſerv'd among any, ſo much true *Genius* as among the *Engliſh*; no where more Sharpneſs of Wit, more Pleaſantneſs of *Humour*, more Range of Fancy, more Penetration of Thought or Depth of Reflexion among the better Sort: No where more Goodneſs of Nature and of Meaning, nor more Plainneſs of Senſe and of Life, than among the

the common ſort of Country People, nor more blunt Courage and Honeſty, than among our Sea-Men. But with all this, our Country muſt be confeſt, to be what a great Foreign Phyſician call'd it, *The Region of Spleen*, which may ariſe a good deal from the great Uncertainty, and many ſuddain Changes of our Weather in all Seaſons of the Year: And how much theſe affect the Heads and Hearts, eſpecially of the fineſt Tempers, is hard to be believ'd by Men, whoſe Thoughts are not turned to ſuch Speculations. This (ſays *Temple*) makes us unequal in our *Humours*, inconſtant in our Paſſions, uncertain in our Ends, and even in our Deſires. But what effect ſoever ſuch a Compoſition may have upon our Lives or our Government, it muſt needs have a good one upon *our Stage*, and has given admirable Play to our *Comical* Wits. So that, in my Opinion, ſays *Temple*, there is no *Vein* of that ſort, either *Ancient* or *Modern*, which excels or equals the *Humour* of our Plays. *Sir* **Will. Temple**'s *Eſſay of* Poetry, *pag.* 53, 54, &c.

That the *Engliſh Drama* is of late very much improved, appears by theſe following Lines;

At firſt the Muſick *of* our Stage *was rude,*
Whilſt in the Cock-Pit *and* Black-Friers *it ſtood:*
And this *might pleaſe enough in former Reigns,*
A thrifty, thin, and baſhful Audience:
When Buſſy' d'Ambois *and his Fuſtian took,*
And Men were raviſh'd with Queen Gordobuc.
But ſince our Monarch, *by kind Heaven ſent,*
Brought back the Arts with him from Baniſhment,
And by his gentle Influence gave increaſe
To all the harmleſs Luxuries of Peace:

Favour'd

Favour'd by him, our Stage *has flouriſh'd too,*
And every day in outward Splendor grew:
In Muſick, Song, *and* Dance *of every kind,*
And all the Grace of Action 'tis refin'd;
And ſince that Opera's *at length came in,*
Our Players *have ſo well improv'd the* Scene
With Gallantry of Habit, and Machine,
As makes our *Theatre in Glory vie*
With the beſt Ages of Antiquity:
And mighty Roſcius, *were he living now,*
Would envy both our Stage, *and* Acting *too.*

Oldham, in Imitat. of *Horace's Art* of *Poetry,* pag. 18, 19.

They who have beſt ſucceeded on the Stage,
Have ſtill conform'd their Genius to their Age.
Thus Johnſon *did* Mechanick *Humour ſhow,*
When Men were dull, and Converſation low.
Then, Comedy *was faultleſs, but 'twas courſe:*
Cobb's *Tankard was a Jeſt, and* Otter's *Horſe.*
And as their Comedy, *their* Love *was mean:*
Except, by chance, in ſome one labour'd Scene,
Which muſt atone for an ill-written Play.
They roſe; *but at their height could ſeldom ſtay.*
Fame *then was cheap, and the firſt Comer ſped;*
And they have kept it ſince, by being dead.
But were they now *to write when* Criticks *weigh*
Each Line, and ev'ry Word, throughout a Play,
None of 'em, no not Johnſon, *in his height*
Could paſs, without allowing Grains for weight.
Think it not envy that theſe Truths are told,
Our Poet's *not malicious, though he's bold.*
'Tis not to brand 'em, that their Faults are ſhown,
But, by their *Errors, to excuſe* his own.

If

If Love *and* Honour now *are higher rais'd,*
'Tis not the Poet, *but the* Age *is prais'd.*
Wit's *now arriv'd to a more high degree;*
Our native Language more refin'd and free.
Our Ladies *and our* Men *now speak more* Wit
In Converſation, than thoſe Poets *writ.*

Dryd. Epilogue to the 2d Part of *Granada.*

Dryden tells us, That *Johnſon*, *Fletcher*, and *Shakeſpear*, are honour'd, and almoſt ador'd by us, as they deſerve; Neither do I know (*ſays he*) any ſo preſumptuous of themſelves as to contend with them; Yet give me leave to ſay thus much, without Injury to their Aſhes, that not only *we* ſhall never equal *them*, but *they* could never equal *themſelves*, were they to riſe and write again. We acknowledge them our Fathers in Wit, ſays *Dryden*, but they have ruin'd their Eſtates themſelves before they came to their Childrens Hands. There is ſcarce an Humour, a Character, or any kind of Plot, which they have not us'd. All comes ſullied or waſted to us: and were *they* to entertain this Age, they could not *now* make ſo plenteous Treatments out of ſuch decay'd Fortunes. This therefore will be a good Argument to us, either not to write at all, or to attempt ſome other way. There is no *Bays* (ſays *Dryden*) to be expected in their Walks; *Tentanda via eſt quà me quoque poſſum tollere humo.*

This way of Writing in *Verſe*, ſays *Dryden*, they have only left free to us; our Age is arriv'd to a perfection in it, which *they* never knew; and which (if we may gueſs by what of theirs we have ſeen in *Verſe*; as the *Faithful Shepherdeſs*, and *Sad Shepherd*:) 'tis probable they never could have reach'd. For the *Genius* of every Age is different; and though *ours* ex-

cel in *this*, I deny not, says *Dryden*, but that to imitate Nature in that Perfection which they did in *Prose*, is a greater Commendation, than to write in *Verse* exactly. Dryd. *Essay of* Dram. Poesie, *pag.* 45, 46.

Rimer says, He fears what *Quintilian* pronounced concerning the *Roman Comedy*, may as justly be said of *English Tragedy*: *In Tragœdiâ maximè claudicamus, vix levem consequimur Umbram*: In *Tragedy* we come short extreamly. We have hardly any Shadow of it. Rymer's Short view of *Tragedy*, pag. 85.

Dr. *Burnet*, the present Bishop of *Salisbury*, remarks, That the *English Language* has wrought it self out, both of the fulsome Pedantry, under which it labour'd long ago, and the trifling way of dark and unintelligible Wit, that came after *that*, and out of the course Extravagance of *Canting* that succeeded *this*: But as one Extream commonly produces another, so we were beginning to fly into a Sublime pitch, of a strong but false Rhetorick, which had much corrupted, not only the *Stage*, but even the *Pulpit*; two places, that though they ought not to be named together, much less to resemble one another; yet (says *Burnet*) it cannot be denied, but the Rule and Measure of Speech is generally taken from them: but that florid Strain is almost quite worn out, and is become *now* as ridiculous as it was once admired. So that without either the Expence or Labour that the *French* have undergone, our *Language* has, like a rich Wine, wrought out its *Tartar*, and is insensibly brought to a Purity that could not have been compassed without much Labour; had it not been for the great advantage we have of a *Prince* [*Charles* the 2d.] who is so great a Judge, that his single approbation or dislike, says *Burnet*, has almost as great an Authority over our *Language*, as his Prerogative gives him over

our

our *Coin.* We are *now* ſo much refin'd, that how defective ſoever our Imaginations or Reaſonings may be, yet our *Language*, ſays *Burnet*, has fewer faults, and is more natural and proper, than it was ever at any time before. When one compares the beſt Writers of the *laſt Age*, with thoſe that excel in *this*, the difference is very diſcernable: even the great Sir *Francis Bacon*, that was the firſt that writ our *Language* correctly, as he is ſtill our beſt Author, yet in ſome places has Figures ſo ſtrong, that they could not paſs *now* before a ſevere Judge. I will not (ſays *Burnet*) provoke the preſent Maſters of the Stage, by preferring the Authors of the laſt Age to them: for though they all acknowledge that *they* come far ſhort of *Ben. Johnſon*, *Beaumont*, and *Fletcher*, yet I believe they are better pleas'd to ſay this *themſelves*, than to have it obſerv'd by *others*. Their *Language* is *now* certainly properèr, and more natural than it was formerly, chiefly ſince the Correction that was given by the *Rehearſal*, writ by the late *Duke* of *Buckingham*; And it is to be hoped, ſays *Burnet*, that the *Eſſay* on *Poetry*, [writ by the *Earl* of *Mulgrave*,] which may be well matched with the beſt Pieces of its kind that even *Auguſtus's* Age produced, will have a more powerful Operation, if clear Senſe, joyned with home but gentle Reproofs, can work more on our Writers, than that unmerciful expoſing them has done. **Gilb. Burnet's** *Preface to his* Tranſlat. *of Sir* Tho. More's Utopia.

I am ſorry, ſays *Dryden*, that (ſpeaking ſo Noble a *Language* as *we* do) we have not a more *certain Meaſure* of it, as they have in *France*, where they have an *Academy* erected for that purpoſe, and indow'd with large Priviledges by the preſent King. I wiſh, ſays *Dryden*, we might at length leave to borrow words from

ther Nations, which is now a *Wantonneſs* in us, not a *Neceſſity*; but ſo long as *ſome* affect to ſpeak them; there will not want *others*, who will have the boldneſs to write them. **Dryd.** Dedic. *to the E. of* Orrery *before the* Rival-Ladies.

It would mortifie an *Engliſh* Man, to conſider, that from the time of *Boccace*, and of *Petrarch*, the *Italian Language* has varied very little: And that the *Engliſh* of *Chaucer* their Contemporary, is not to be underſtood without the help of an old *Dictionary*. But their *Goth* and *Vandal* had the Fortune to be grafted on a *Roman* Stock: Ours has the diſadvantage to be founded on the *Dutch*. We are full of *Monoſyllables*, and thoſe clog'd with *Conſonants*, and our *Pronunciation* is *effeminate*. All which are Enemies to a ſounding *Language*: 'Tis true, that to ſupply our Poverty, we have traffick'd with our Neighbour Nations; by which means we abound as much in *Words*, as *Amſterdam* does in *Religions*; but to order them, and make them uſeful after their admiſſion is the difficulty. A greater Progreſs has been made in this, ſince his Majeſty's *Return*, than perhaps ſince the *Conqueſt* to *his* time. But the better part of the Work remains unfiniſh'd: And that which has been done already, ſince it has only been in the Practice of ſome few Writers, muſt be digeſted into Rules and Method; before it can be profitable to the General. **Dryd.** Dedic. *to the E. of* Sunderland *before* Troilus *and* Creſſida.

Our *Language* is both Copious, Significant, and Majeſtical; and might be reduc'd into a more harmonious Sound. But for want of Publick Encouragement, in this *Iron Age*, we are ſo far from making any Progreſs in the improvement of our Tongue, that in few years,

we

we ſhall ſpeak and write as Barbarouſly as our Neighbours. **Dryd.** Dedic. *to the* Lord Radcliffe, *before* Examen Poëticum.

Rapin ſays, That the *Engliſh Language* is proper for great Expreſſions. Reflex. *on* Ariſtot. *Part* 2. *Sect.* 23.

Concerning the Italian *and* Spaniſh Poetry; *and their* Languages *in relation to* Poetry.

Rimer tells us, That in the beginning of the laſt Century, when People began to open their Eyes, and look farther into the Matters of Religion and good Literature, *Italy* had much the ſtart and advantage of the reſt of *Europe*; thither were *Ariſtotle's* Works firſt brought a-ſhore; and there were they Tranſlated, Conn'd, and Commented by the chiefeſt Wits amongſt them. And above all, his *Poetica* engag'd their utmoſt care and application.

So many Comments had they made, and ſo many Critical Obſervations, before, on this ſide the *Alps*, any thing in that way was underſtood, that they began to lay it down for a truth, That the *Tramontans* had no *Guſto*. *Oltramontani*, ſays one of them, *non ſono Zelanti delle buone Regole de Greci, & de Latini. They make no Conſcience of breaking the good Laws of the* Greeks *and* Latins.

Others undertook to put in Practice, and write by *his* Principles and Direction. *Bibiena* (afterwards a Cardinal)

Cardinal) first try'd his Talent on a *Comedy*; and was follow'd by *Ariosto*, *Piccolomini*, *Machiavel*, and many others, who took *Plautus* and *Terence* for their Patterns.

Trissino, *Ruscalli*, *Cinthio*, *Tasso*, with many more, wrote *Tragedies* in Blank Verse, with the *Chorus*; and every thing to the best of their power, after the *Athenian* Models.

But *Italy*, says *Rimer*, had no *Fund* for the vast Charge of *Dramatick* Representations; they had no standing Revenue for the *Theatre*; and however Magnificent some Prince might be on an extraordinary Wedding, or great Occasion; there was nothing constant, nor could it, in such Circumstances, be expected, that the *Drama* there should turn to account, or rise to any tolerable Reputation. Therefore the ordinary Business of the Stage was left amongst a Company of *Strolers*, who wandred up and down, acting *Farce*, or turning into *Farce*, whatever they acted. *Castelvetro* tells us, That even at *Rome*, in his time, *Christ's Passion* was so acted by them, as to set all the Audience a laughing. *Rimer's Short view of* Tragedy, *Chap.* v.

From *Spain* little observable can be expected in relation to *Dramatick Poetry*; since *Campanella* had assur'd them, That it is *The Nurse of Heresie*.

So Father *Guzman* informs us, That his *Catholick* Majesty, *Philip* II. towards the end of his Life, (when his Wisdom was *en su punto*, on the point of Perfection) did quite banish it the Country.

We are also told by another *Jesuite*, how Religiously the *truly Catholick*, *Phil.* IV. in the Year 1646. packt it away, as the Common Plague, from out the Kingdoms of *Spain*, by his Royal Edict.

So

So we see this *Nurse of Hereſie*, this *Head of the* Panga Hydra, is like to have no footing within the *Catholick* Majeſties Dominions. The *Inquiſition* and the *Muſes* muſt not ſet their Horſes together. **Rimer**, *Ibidem.*

Rapin informs us, That the *Italian* and *Spaniſh Poets*, have ſcarce ever yet ſubjected their Wit to Rules of Art. Into what Enormities hath *Petrarch* run in his *Africa*; *Arioſto* in his *Orlando Furioſo*; Cavalier *Marino* in his *Adonis*, and all the other *Italians*, who were ignorant of *Ariſtotle's* Rules; and followed no other Guides but their own *Genius*, and Capricious Fancy: Truth is, ſays *Rapin*, the Wits of *Italy* were ſo prepoſſeſs'd in favour of the *Romantick Poetry* of *Pulci*, *Boyardo*, and *Arioſto*, that they regarded no other Rules, than what the heat of their *Genius* inſpir'd. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *of* Poeſie, *Part* 2. *Sect.* 17. *and* 11.

Rapin in another place, ſpeaking of the *Italian* and *Spaniſh Poets*, ſays, 'Tis too great Honour to call them *Poets*, they being for the moſt part but *Rimeſters*. **Rap.** *Ibid. Sect.* 23.

Rimer ſays, That the *Italian Language* is fitteſt for *Burleſque*, and better becomes the Mouth of *Petrolin* and *Arlequin* in their *Farces*, than any *Heroick* Character. The perpetual Termination in *Vowels* is Childiſh, and themſelves confeſs, rather ſweet than grave.

The *Diſſyllable Rhimes*, ſays *Rimer*, force the *Italians* and *Spaniards* on the *Stanza* in *Heroicks*; which beſides many other diſadvantages, renders the *Language* unfit for *Tragedy*. **Rimer's** *Pref. before his* Tranſlat. *of* Rapin.

Dryden tells us, That 'tis almoſt needleſs to ſpeak any thing of that Noble *Language*, the *Italian*: All, *ſays he*, who are converſant in the *Italian*, cannot but obſerve

obſerve, That it is the ſofteſt, the ſweeteſt, the moſt harmonious, not only of any Modern Tongue, but even beyond any of the Learned. It ſeems indeed to have been invented for the ſake of *Poetry* and *Muſick*; the *Vowels* are ſo abounding in all Words, eſpecially in the Terminations of them, that excepting ſome few *Monoſyllables*, the whole *Language* ends in them. Then the Pronunciation is ſo Manly, and ſo ſonorous, that their very *ſpeaking* has more of *Muſick* in it, than *Dutch Poetry*, and *Song*. It has withal deriv'd ſo much Copiouſneſs and Eloquence from the *Greek* and *Latin*, in the Compoſition of Words, and the Formation of them, that (if after all we muſt call it *Barbarous*) 'tis the moſt Beautiful and moſt Learned of any *Barbariſm* in Modern Tongues. And we may, at leaſt, as juſtly praiſe it, as *Pyrrhus* did the *Roman* Diſcipline and Martial Order, That it was of *Barbarians*, (for ſo the *Greeks* call'd all other Nations,) but had nothing in it of *Barbarity*. This *Language* has in a manner been refin'd and purify'd from the *Gothick*, ever ſince the time of *Dante*; which is above four Hundred years ago; and the *French*, who now caſt a longing Eye to their Country, are not leſs ambitious to poſſeſs their Elegance in *Poetry* and *Muſick*; in both which they labour at Impoſſibilities. **Dryd.** *Pref. to* Albion *and* Albanius.

Con-

Concerning the French Poetry; *and their* Language *in relation to* Poetry.

Francis the Firſt, by whoſe encouragement Letters had begun to flouriſh in *France*, and *Poetry* more particularly by the means of *Clement Marot*, (who then tranſlated the *Pſalms*, and ſent abroad his *Balades*, which *Campanella* reckons to have uſher'd in the *Hereſie*.) this King *Francis*, ſays *Rimer*, was much delighted, for want of better, with a Company of *Strolers*, who wandred up and down, acting *Farce*, or turning into *Farce*, whatever they Acted. At the latter end of his Reign we find a *Cauſe* of the *Strolers* notably pleaded and debated amongſt their Lawyers and the King's Counſel——King *Francis* liv'd about five or ſix Years after. And then were the *Comedians* both *French* and *Italians*, all pack'd off, and baniſhed the Kingdom.

In 1597. *Peter l'Ariveu* publiſhed *Comedies* written, as he tells us, in imitation of the Ancient *Greeks*, *Latins*, and Modern *Italians*.

And the End he propos'd was according to *Horace*,

Quelque profit, & Contentement enſemble.

After him *Alexander Hardy* attempted *Tragedy*, whoſe Works were publiſh'd *Ann.* 1625. Not long after ſucceeded the famous *Corneille*, who began to write for the Stage, after *Hardy's* Model.

And now, says *Rimer*, if the *French* Theatre did not rise to equal the Glory of the *Romans*, and Ancient *Greeks*, it was not for want of Encouragement from the Government. Cardinal *Richelieu*, who had the power in his hand, did heartily and generously perform his part. *He* founded the *Academy Royal*, and more especially provided for the Theatre. Yet with this Caution, never to represent *Aucunes Actions Malhonestes, ny d'user d'aucunes paroles lascives, ny à double entente, qui puissent blesser l'honnesteté publique.* And we find the *Poets* stand corrected, and do penance, if they chance to offend against this Declaration.

Rimer says, That in points of Decency the *French* are certainly very delicate, and commendable. The noble Encouragement they met withal, and their singular application have carried them very far in the improvement of the *Drama*. Nor were the Audience to be taxed for the hasty applause, they have often given to *Plays* of no great Merit. It has been so in all Nations, says *Rimer*. As, in *Pictures*, A Man who had never seen such a thing before, wou'd find his amusement, and be in admiration at every *Sign-post*, or *Saracen's Head* that he travels by. The first Plays of *Corneille* were better, that is, more regular, than any before him; the Audience had never seen the like. They *now* see the difference betwixt his first Essays, and the Plays composed in his riper Years.

After all, says *Rimer*, it is observ'd, how much that wild-goose-chase of *Romance* runs still in their head; some Scenes of *Love* must every where be shuffled in, tho' never so unseasonable. The *Grecians* were for *Love* and *Musick* as mad as any *Monsieur* of 'em all; yet their *Musick* kept within Bounds; attempted no Metamorphosis to turn the *Drama* to an *Opera*. Nor did their

Love

Love come whining on the Stage, to Effeminate the Majeſty of their Tragedy. It was not any love for *Briſeis* that made *Achilles* ſo wroth; it was the affront, in taking his booty from him, in the face of the Confederate Army. This, his Stomach cou'd not digeſt.

——*nec gravem*
Peleidæ Stomachum cedere neſcii. Horat.

One, with the Genius of *Miguel Cervante*, might, doubtleſs, find matter for as good a *Satyr*, from the *French Gallantry*, ſays *Rimer*, as *He* had done from the *Spaniſh Chivalry*. **Rimer**'s ſhort view of *Tragedy*, *chapt.* v.

Dryden obſerves to us, That the Excellency of *French Poetry* does conſiſt in the *nicety* of *Manners*: Their *Heroes* are the moſt civil People breathing; but their good Breeding ſeldom extends to a word of Senſe: All their Wit is in their Ceremony: They want the Genius which animates our Stage; and therefore 'tis but neceſſary when they cannot *pleaſe*, that they ſhould take care not to *offend*. But, as the Civileſt Man in the Company is commonly the dulleſt, ſo theſe Authors, while they are afraid to make you laugh or cry, out of pure good manners, make you ſleep. They are ſo careful not to exaſperate a *Critique*, that they never leave him any Work; ſo buſie with the Broom, and make ſo clean a riddance, that there is little left either for *Cenſure* or for *Praiſe*: For no part of a *Poem* is worth our diſcommending, where the whole is inſipid; as when we have once taſted of pall'd Wine, we ſtay not to examine it Glaſs by Glaſs. But while they affect to ſhine in *trifles*, they are often careleſs in

Eſſentials. **Dryd.** Pref. to *All for Love*; or, *The World well loſt.*

The preſent *French Poets* are generally accus'd, That whereſoever they lay the Scene, or in whatſoever Age, the manners of their *Heroes* are wholly *French*: *Racin's Bajazet*, is bred at *Conſtantinople*; but his Civilities are convey'd to him by ſome ſecret paſſage, from *Verſailles* into the *Seraglio*. **Dryd.** *Pref. to* Troilus *and* Creſſida.

Rapin tells us, That *Judgement* is not the Ordinary Talent of the *French*; 'tis generally in the Contrivance of their Deſign, that their *Poets* are defective; and nothing is more rare among them, than a Deſign that is great, juſt, and well conceiv'd. They pretend to be more happy in the Talents of *Wit* and *Fancy*. **Rap.** *part* 1. *ſect.* 19. *on* Ariſt. *Treat. of* Poeſie.

We may (ſays *Rapin*) flatter our ſelves with our *Wit*, and the *Genius* of our Nation; but our Soul is not enough exalted to frame great *Idea's*; we are buſied with *petty Subjects*, and by that means it is, that we prove ſo cold in the *great*; and that in our Works ſcarce appears any Shadow of that *Sublime Poeſie*, of which the Ancient *Poets* have left ſuch excellent Models, and above all *Homer* and *Virgil*; for *great Poetry* muſt be animated and ſuſtain'd by *great Thoughts*, and *great Sentiments*; but *theſe* we ordinarily want, ſays *Rapin*; either becauſe our *Wit* is too much limited, or becauſe we take not care to exerciſe it on *important* Matters. **Rap.** *Ibid. ſect.* 26.

The *Genius* of our Nation, ſays *Rapin*, is not ſtrong enough, to ſuſtain an Action on the Theatre by moving only *Terror* and *Pity*. Theſe are *Machins* that will not *play* as they ought, but by *great Thoughts*, and *noble Expreſſions*, of which we are not indeed altogether ſo capable,

capable, as the *Greeks*. Perhaps, ſays *Rapin*, our Nation, which is naturally Gallant, has been oblig'd, by the neceſſity of our Character, to frame for our ſelves a new *Syſtem* of *Tragedy*, to ſuit with our Humour. **Rap.** *on* Ariſt. *Treatiſe of* Poeſie, *part* 2. *ſect.* xx.

Sir *William Temple* takes notice, That to ſupply the Defects of the *Modern Poetry*, much Application has been made to the ſmoothneſs of *Language* or *Stile*; which has at the beſt, but the Beauty of Colouring in a Picture, and can never make a good one, without Spirit and Strength. The *Academy* ſet up by Cardinal *Richelieu*, to amuſe the Wits of that Age and Country, and divert them from rakeing into his Politicks and Miniſtry, brought *this* in Vogue; and the *French* Wits have for this laſt Age, been in a manner wholly turn'd to the Refinement of their *Language*, and indeed with ſuch ſucceſs, that it can hardly be excell'd, and runs equally through their *Verſe* and their *Proſe*. *Sir* **Will. Temple**'s *Eſſay of* Poetry, *pag.* 52, 53.

Dryden ſays, 'tis true indeed, the *French* have reform'd their Tongue, and brought both their *Proſe* and *Poetry* to a Standard; the ſweetneſs, as well as the Purity is much improv'd, by throwing off the unneceſſary *Conſonants*, which made their Spelling tedious, and their Pronunciation harſh: But after all, as nothing can be improv'd beyond its own *Species*, or farther than its Original Nature will allow; as an ill Voice, tho' never ſo throughly inſtructed in the Rules of Muſick, can never be brought to Sing Harmoniouſly, nor many an Honeſt *Critick* ever arrive to be a good *Poet*; ſo neither can the natural Harſhneſs of the *French*, or their perpetual ill Accent, be ever refin'd into perfect Harmony like the *Italian*. **Dryd.** *Pref. to* Albion *and* Albanius.

The

The *French Language*, ſays *Rimer*, wants ſtrength and Sinews, is too feeble for the Weight and Majeſty of *Tragedy*. We ſee their *Conſonants* ſpread on Paper, but they ſtick in the Hedge; they paſs not their teeth in their Pronunciation.

The *French*, ſays *Rimer*, are not only fetter'd with *Ryme*, but their *Verſe* is the long *Alexandrine*, of Twelve Syllables; with a ſtop, or pauſe always in the middle: Their own beſt Authors are ſenſible of this halt in their *Verſe*, and complain of that *Ceſure* and perpetual *Monotomy* as they call it. **Rimer**'s *ſhort view of* Tragedy, *chapt.* v.

Concerning Rhyme, *and* Blank Verſe.

Dryden tells us, The advantages which *Rhyme* has over *Blank Verſe*, are ſo many, that it were loſt time to name them: Sir *Philip Sidney*, in his Defence of *Poeſie*, gives us one, which, in my opinion, ſays *Dryden*, is not the leaſt conſiderable; I mean, the help it brings to *Memory*; which *Rhyme* ſo knits up by the affinity of Sounds; that by remembring the laſt Words in one Line, we often call to mind both the Verſes. Then in the quickneſs of *Reparties* (which in Diſcourſive Scenes fall very often) it has ſo particular a Grace, and is ſo aptly ſuited to them, that the ſudden ſmartneſs of the Anſwer, and the ſweetneſs of the *Rhyme*, ſet off the Beauty of each other. But that benefit which

which I conſider moſt in it, ſays *Dryden*, becauſe I have not ſeldom found it, is, that it bounds and circumſcribes the *Fancy*. For imagination in a *Poet* is a Faculty ſo wild and lawleſs, that, like an *high-ranging Spaniel*, it muſt have *Clogs* tied to it, leſt it out-run the *Judgment*. The great eaſineſs of *Blank Verſe*, renders the *Poet* too luxuriant; he is tempted to ſay many things which might better be omitted, or at leaſt ſhut up in fewer Words: But when the difficulty of Artful *Rhyming* is interpos'd, where the *Poet* commonly confines his Senſe to his Couplet, and muſt contrive that Senſe into ſuch Words, that the *Rhyme* ſhall naturally follow *them*, not *they* the *Rhyme*; the *Fancy* then gives leiſure to the *Judgment* to come in; which ſeeing ſo heavy a Tax impos'd, is ready to cut off all unneceſſary Expences. This laſt Conſideration has already anſwer'd an Objection which ſome have made; that *Rhyme* is only an Embroidery of Senſe, to make that which is ordinary in it ſelf, paſs for Excellent, with leſs Examination. But certainly, that which moſt regulates the *Fancy*, and gives the *Judgment* its buſieſt Employment, is like to bring forth the richeſt and cleareſt Thoughts. The *Poet* examines that moſt which he produceth with the greateſt leiſure, and which he knows muſt paſs the ſevereſt Teſt of the Audience, becauſe they are apteſt to have it ever in their Memory: As the Stomach makes the beſt Concoction, when it ſtrictly embraces the Nouriſhment, and takes account of every little particle as it paſſes through. **Dryd.** Dedic. *to the* Earl *of* Orrery, *before the* Rival Ladies.

Shakeſpear (who with ſome Errors not to be avoided in that Age, had, undoubtedly, a larger Soul of *Poeſie* than ever any of our Nation) was the firſt, who, to ſhun the pains of continual *Rhyming*, invented that kind of

of Writing, which we call *Blank Verſe*, but the *French* more properly, *Proſe Meſurée*; into which the *Engliſh Tongue* ſō naturally ſlides, that in Writing *Proſe* 'tis hardly to be avoided. And therefore, I admire, ſays *Dryden*, that ſome Men ſhould perpetually ſtumble in a way ſo eaſie. Dryd. *Ibid.*

Whether *Heroick Verſe* ought to be admitted into ſerious Plays, is not now to be diſputed: 'Tis already in poſſeſſion of the Stage: And I dare confidently affirm, ſays *Dryden*, that very few *Tragedies*, in this Age, ſhall be receiv'd without it. All the Arguments which are form'd againſt it, can amount to no more than this, that it is not ſo near Converſation as *Proſe*; and therefore not ſo natural. But it is very clear (ſays *Dryden*) to all who underſtand *Poetry*, that ſerious Plays ought not to imitate Converſation too nearly. If nothing were to be rais'd above that level, the foundation of *Poetry* would be deſtroy'd. And, if you once admit of a Latitude, that Thoughts may be exalted, and that Images and Actions may be rais'd above the Life, and deſcrib'd in *Meaſure* without *Rhyme*, that leads you (ſays *Dryden*) inſenſibly from your own Principles to mine: You are already ſo far onward of your way, that you have forſaken the Imitation of ordinary Converſe. You are gone beyond it; and, to continue where you are, is to lodge in the open field, betwixt two Inns. You have loſt that which you call Natural, and have not acquir'd the laſt perfection of Art. But it was only *Cuſtome* which cozen'd us ſo long: We thought, becauſe *Shakeſpear* and *Fletcher* went no farther, that *there* the Pillars of *Poetry* were to be erected. That, becauſe *they* excellently deſcrib'd Paſſion without *Rhyme*, therefore *Rhyme* was not capable of deſcribing it. But time has now convinc'd moſt Men of that Error. 'Tis indeed

ſo

ſo difficult to write *Verſe*, that the Adverſaries of it have a good Plea againſt many who undertake that Task, without being form'd by Art or Nature for it. Yet, even they (ſays *Dryden*) who have written worſt *in* it, would have written worſe *without* it. They have couzen'd many with their Sound, who never took the pains to examine their Senſe. *In fine*, they have ſucceeded: Though 'tis true, they have more diſhonour'd *Rhyme* by their good ſucceſs, than they could have done by their ill. But I am willing, ſays *Dryden*, to let fall this Argument: 'Tis free for every Man to write, or not to write, in *Verſe*, as he judges it to be, or not to be his Talent; or as he imagines the *Audience* will receive it. Dryd. *Eſſay of* Heroick Plays; *before* Almanzor *and* Almahide.

Mr. *Milton* labour'd all he could, to free us from the *troubleſome Bondage of Rhyming*, as he calls it; and by his Incomparable Poems of *Paradiſe Loſt* and *Paradiſe Regain'd*, has given us a moſt perfect Example of *Blank Verſe*.

How the Noble, and Ingenious Lord *Roſcommon*, ſtood affected to *Rhyme*, appears by theſe following Lines:

Of many faults Rhyme *is (perhaps) the Cauſe,*
Too ſtrict to Rhyme *we ſlight more uſeful Laws.*
For That, *in* Greece *or* Rome, *was never known,*
Till by Barbarian *Deluges o'reflown,*
Subdu'd, undone, *They did at laſt* Obey,
And change their own *for their* Invaders *way.*
I grant that from ſome Moſſie, Idol Oak
In Double Rhymes *our* Thor *and* Woden *ſpoke;*

And by Succeſſion of unlearned Times,
As Bards *began, ſo* Munks *rung on the Chimes.*
But now that Phœbus *and the* Sacred Nine,
With all their Beams on our bleſt Iſlands ſhine,
Why ſhould not We *their* Ancient Rites *reſtore,*
And be, what Rome *or* Athens *were before?*
Roſcom. *Eſſay on* Tranſlated Verſe.

Concerning Tranſlations.

MR. *James Howel* remarks, That every Mans *Genius* is not cut out for a *Tranſlator*, there being a kind of ſervility therein; For (*ſays he*) it muſt needs be ſomewhat tedious to one that hath any Free-born Thoughts within him, and genuine Conceptions of his own, to enchain himſelf to a *Verbal* Servitude, and the ſenſe of another. Moreover, *Tranſlations* are but as *turn-coated* Things at beſt; ſays *Howel*, eſpecially among *Languages* that have advantages one of another, as the *Italian* hath of the *Engliſh*, which may be ſaid to differ *one* from the *other* as *Silk* does from *Cloth*, the common wear of both Countries where they are ſpoken: And as *Cloth* is the more ſubſtantial, ſo the *Engliſh Tongue* by reaſon 'tis ſo knotted with *Conſonants*, is the ſtronger, and the more ſinewy of the two; But *Silk* is more ſmooth and ſlik, and ſo is the *Italian Tongue* compar'd to the *Engliſh*. Or elſe, ſays *Howel*, *Tranſlations* are like the wrong ſide of a *Turky* Carpet, which uſes to be full of Thrums and Knots, and nothing

thing ſo even as the right ſide. Or, to conclude, *Tranſlations* are like *Wines* taken off the Lees, and pour'd into other Veſſels, that muſt needs loſe ſomewhat of their firſt ſtrength and briskneſs, which in the pouring, or paſſage rather evaporates into air.

Moreover touching *Tranſlations*, ſays *Howel*, it is to be obſerv'd, That every *Language* hath certain *Idiomes*, Proverbs and peculiar Expreſſions of *its own*; which are not rendible in any other but *Paraphraſtically*; therefore he overacts the Office of an *Interpreter*, who doth enſlave himſelf too ſtrictly to Words or Phraſes; I have heard (ſays *Howel*) of an *Exceſs* among *Limners*, call'd *too much to the Life*, which happens when one aims at *likeneſs* more than *skill*; So in Verſion of *Languages* one may be ſo over punctual in Words, that he may mar the matter; The greateſt fidelity that can be expected in a *Tranſlator*, is to keep ſtill a foot, and entire, the true genuine Senſe of the *Author*, with the main Deſign he drives at. **Howel's** *Famil. Lett. Vol.* 3. *Lett.* 21.

Dr. *Burnet*, the preſent Biſhop of *Salisbury*, obſerves, That there is no way of Writing ſo proper, for the refining and poliſhing a *Language*, as the *Tranſlating* of Books into it, if he that undertakes it, has a competent skill of the *one* Tongue, and is a Maſter of the *other*. When a Man writes his own Thoughts, the heat of his Fancy, and the quickneſs of his Mind, carry him ſo much after the Notions themſelves, that for the moſt part he is too warm to judge of the aptneſs of Words, and the juſtneſs of Figures; ſo that he either neglects theſe too much, or over-does them: But when a Man *Tranſlates*, he has none of theſe Heats about him: And therefore the *French* took no ill Method, when they intended to reform and beautifie their *Lan-*

guage, in ſetting their beſt Writers on Work to *Tranſlate* the *Greek* and *Latin* Authors into it. There is ſo little praiſe got by *Tranſlations*, that a Man cannot be engaged to it out of Vanity, for it has paſt for a ſign of a ſlow Mind, that can amuſe it ſelf with ſo mean an Entertainment. But we begin to grow wiſer, ſays *Burnet*, and tho' ordinary *Tranſlators* muſt ſucceed ill in the eſteem of the World, yet ſome have appear'd of late that will, I hope, bring that way of Writing in Credit. **Burnet**'s *Pref. to his* Tranſlat. *of Sir* Tho. More's Utopia.

'Tis true, Compoſing *is the Nobler Part*,
But good Tranſlation *is no eaſie Art*:
For tho' Materials *have long ſince been found*,
Yet both your fancy, *and your* Hands *are* bound;
And by Improving *what was writ* Before;
Invention *labours* leſs, *but* Judgment, more.
Roſcom's *Eſſay on* Tranſlated Verſe.

Dryden tells us, That a *Tranſlator* is to make his Author appear as charming as poſſibly he can, provided he maintains his *Character*, and makes him not unlike himſelf. *Tranſlation*, ſays *Dryden*, is a kind of Drawing after the Life; where every one will acknowledge there is a double ſort of *Likeneſs*, a good one and a bad. 'Tis *one* thing to draw the Out-lines true, the Features like, the Proportions exact, the Colouring it ſelf perhaps tolerable; and *another* thing to make all theſe graceful, by the poſture, the ſhadowings, and chiefly by the Spirit which animates the whole. I cannot, ſays *Dryden*, without ſome indignation, look on an ill *Copy* of an Excellent *Original*. Much leſs can I behold

behold with patience *Virgil*, *Homer*, and ſome others, whoſe Beauties (ſays *Dryden*) I have been endeavouring all my Life to imitate, ſo abus'd, as I may ſay to their faces by a botching Interpreter. What *Engliſh* Readers unacquainted with *Greek* or *Latin* will believe Me or any other Man, when we commend thoſe Authors, and confeſs we derive all that is pardonable in us from their Fountains, if they take thoſe to be the ſame *Poets*, whom our *Ogleby*'s have *Tranſlated?* But I dare aſſure them, ſays *Dryden*, that a good *Poet* is no more like himſelf, in a dull *Tranſlation*, than his Carcaſs would be to his living Body. There are many who underſtand *Greek* and *Latin*, and yet are ignorant of their Mother Tongue. The proprieties and delicacies of the *Engliſh* are known to few; 'tis impoſſible even for a good Wit, to underſtand and practice them without the help of a liberal Education, long Reading, and digeſting of thoſe few good Authors we have amongſt us, the Knowledge of Men and Manners, the freedom of Habitudes, and Converſation with the beſt Company of both Sexes; and in ſhort, without wearing off the ruſt which he contracted, while he was laying in a Stock of Learning. Thus difficult it is to underſtand the purity of *Engliſh*, and critically to diſcern not only good Writers from bad, and a proper ſtile from a Corrupt, but alſo to diſtinguiſh that which is pure in a good Author, from that which is Vicious and Corrupt in him. And for want of all theſe Requiſites, or the greateſt part of them, moſt of our Ingenious young Men, ſays *Dryden*, take ſome cry'd up *Engliſh* Poet for their Model, adore him, and imitate him as they think, without knowing wherein he is defective, where he is Boyiſh and trifling, wherein either his Thoughts

are

are improper to his Subject, or his Expreſſions unworthy of his Thoughts, or the Turn of both is unharmonious. Thus it appears neceſſary, that a Man ſhou'd be a nice Critick in his Mother Tongue, before he attempts to *Tranſlate* a foreign Language. Neither is it ſufficient that he be able to judge of Words and Stile; but he muſt be a Maſter of them too: He muſt perfectly underſtand his Authors Tongue, and abſolutely command his own: So that to be a thorow *Tranſlator*, he muſt be a thorow *Poet*. Neither is it enough to give his Authors Senſe, in good *Engliſh*, in Poëtical Expreſſions, and in Muſical Numbers: For, tho' all theſe are exceeding difficult to perform, there yet remains an harder Task; and 'tis a ſecret of which few *Tranſlators* have ſufficiently thought. I have already hinted a Word or two concerning it; that is, the maintaining the *Character* of an Author, which diſtinguiſhes him from all others, and makes him appear that Individual Poet whom you wou'd Interpret. For example, not only the Thoughts, but the Style and Verſification of *Virgil* and *Ovid*, are very different: Yet I ſee, ſays *Dryden*, even in our beſt *Poets*, who have *Tranſlated* ſome parts of them, that they have confounded their ſeveral Talents; and by endeavouring only at the ſweetneſs and harmony of *Numbers*, have made them both ſo much alike, that if I did not know the *Originals*, I ſhou'd never be able to judge by the *Copies*, which was *Virgil*, and which was *Ovid*. It was objected againſt a late noble Painter, that he drew many Graceful Pictures, but few of them were like. And this happen'd to him, becauſe he always ſtudied himſelf more than thoſe who ſate to him. In ſuch *Tranſlators*, ſays *Dryden*, I can eaſily diſtinguiſh the hand which

which perform'd the Work, but I cannot diſtinguiſh *their* Poet from *another*. Suppoſe two Authors are equally *ſweet*, yet there is a great diſtinction to be made in *Sweetneſs*, as in that of *Sugar*, and that of *Honey*. **Dryd.** *Pref. to the* 2d. *Part of* Poetic. Miſcell.

A *Tranſlator* ſhould not go ſo cloſe, as to tread on the heels of his *Author*, and ſo hurt him by his too near approach. A noble *Author* wou'd not be perſu'd too cloſe by a *Tranſlator*. We loſe his *Spirit*, when we think to take his *Body*. The *groſſer Part* remains with us, but the *Soul* is flown away, in ſome Noble Expreſſion or ſome delicate turn of Words, or Thought. **Dryd.** Dedic. *before the* Tranſlat. *of* Juvenal, *pag.* 52.

Sir *John Denham* ſays, There are ſo few *Tranſlations* which deſerve *praiſe*, that he ſcarce ever ſaw any which deſerv'd pardon; thoſe who travel in that kind, being for the moſt part ſo unhappy, as to rob others, without enriching themſelves, pulling down the fame of good Authors, without raiſing their own: Neither hath any Author been more hardly dealt withal, than *Virgil*; and the reaſon is Evident; for, what is more excellent, is moſt inimitable, and if even the *Worſt Authors* are yet made worſe by their *Tranſlators*, how impoſſible is it, not to do great injury to the *Beſt*?

I conceive it, ſays *Denham*, a vulgar Error in *Tranſlating Poets*, to affect being *Fidus Interpres*; let that care be with them who deal in Matters of *Fact*, or Matters of *Faith*: But whoſoever aims at it in *Poetry*, as he attempts what is not requir'd, ſo he ſhall never perform what he attempts; for it is not his buſineſs alone to *Tranſlate Language* into *Language*, but *Poeſie* into *Poeſie*; and *Poeſie* is of ſo ſubtile a Spirit, that

that in pouring out of one *Language* into another, it will all evaporate; and if a new Spirit be not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a *Caput Mortuum*, there being certain Graces and Happinesses peculiar to every *Language*, which gives Life and Energy to the Words; And whosoever offers at *Verbal Translations*, shall have the Misfortune of that young *Traveller*, who lost his own *Language* abroad, and brought home no other instead of it: For the Grace of the *Latin* will be lost by being turned into *English* Words; and the Grace of the *English*, by being turn'd into the *Latin* Phrase. And as *Speech* is the Apparel of our Thoughts, so are there certain Garbes and Modes of *Speaking*, which vary with the Times; the fashion of our *Cloaths* being not more subject to alteration, than that of our *Speech*; And this I think *Tacitus* means, by that which he calls, *Sermonem temporis istius auribus accommodatum*; the delight of Change being as due to the curiosity of the *Ear*, as of the *Eye*. **Denham**'s *Pref. to The Destruction of* Troy.

Dr. *Sprat* the present Bishop of *Rochester*, tells us, That this way of leaving *Verbal Translations*, and chiefly regarding the *Sense* and *Genius* of the *Author*, was scarce heard of in *England* before this present Age. *He says*, that if Mr. *Cowley* was not the absolute Inventor of it; yet he is sure, he did conceive it, and discourse of it, and practice it as soon as any Man. **Sprat**'s *Account of the Life of Mr.* Abraham Cowley.

Concerning

Concerning Criticks *and* Criticiſms.

Rimer tells us, That as the *Artiſt* would not take pains to poliſh a *Diamond*, if none beſides himſelf were quick-ſighted enough to diſcern the flaw; ſo *Poets* would grow negligent, if the *Criticks* had not a ſtrict eye over their Miſcarriages. Yet (ſays *Rimer*) it often happens, that this eye is ſo diſtorted by *envy* or *ill nature*, that it ſees nothing aright. Some *Criticks* are like *Waſps*, that rather annoy the *Bees*, than terrifie the *Drones*.

For this ſort of Learning, our Neighbour Nations have got far the ſtart of us; in the laſt *Century*, *Italy* ſwarm'd with *Criticks*, where, amongſt many of leſs note, *Caſtelvetro* oppoſed all Comers; and the famous Academy *La Cruſca* was always impeaching ſome or other of the beſt Authors. *Spain*, in thoſe days, bred great Wits, but I think (ſays *Rimer*,) was never ſo crowded, that they needed to fall out, and quarrel amongſt themſelves. But from *Italy*, *France* took the Cudgels; and tho' ſome light ſtrokes paſſed in the days of *Marot*, *Baif*, &c. yet they fell not to it in earneſt, nor was any noble Conteſt amongſt them, till the *Royal Academy* was founded, and Cardinal *Richelieu* encourag'd and rallied all the ſcatter'd Wits under his Banner. Then *Malherb* reform'd their ancient licentious *Poetry*; and *Corneille's Cid* rais'd many Factions amongſt them. At this time with us many great Wits flouriſh'd, but *Ben Johnſon*, I think, ſays *Rimer*, had all the *Critical* Learning to himſelf; and till of late Years *England* was as free from *Criticks*, as it is now

from *Wolves*, that a harmleſs well-meaning Book might paſs without any danger. But now this priviledge, whatever extraordinary Talent it requires, is uſurped by the moſt ignorant: And they who are leaſt acquainted with the Game, are apteſt to bark at every thing that comes in their way. **Rimer**'s *Pref. to* Rapin's *Reflex. on* Ariſtotle's *Treatiſe of* Poeſie.

The *Anonymous Tranſlator* of St. *Euvremont*'s mixt Eſſays, in his Preface, ſpeaking of Epick Poems, obſerves, That the *Dutch* and *Germans* (as tho' frozen up) have produced little in this kind; yet (*ſays he*) we muſt confeſs that *Grotius*, *Heinſius*, *Scaliger*, and *Voſſius* were Learned *Criticks*. Some of the *Engliſh* have indeed rais'd their Pens, and ſoar'd as high as any of the *Italians*, or *French*; yet *Criticiſm* came but very lately in faſhion amongſt us; without doubt *Ben. Johnſon* had a large ſtock of *Critical* Learning; *Spencer* had ſtudied *Homer*, and *Virgil*, and *Taſſo*, yet he was miſ-led, and debauch'd by *Arioſto*, as Mr. *Rimer* judiciouſly obſerves; *Davenant* gives ſome ſtroaks of great Learning and Judgment, yet he is for unbeaten Tracks, new Ways, and undiſcover'd Seas; *Cowley* was a great Maſter of the *Ancients*, and had the true *Genius* and Character of a *Poet*; yet this nicety and boldneſs of *Criticiſm* was a ſtranger all this time to our Climate; Mr. *Rimer*, and Mr. *Dryden* have begun to launch out into it, and indeed they have been very fortunate Adventurers. The Earls of *Roſcommon* and *Mulgrave*, and Mr. *Waller* have given ſome fine touches; Mr. *Dryden*'s *Criticks* are generally quaint and ſolid, his *Prefaces* (ſays this *Tranſlator*) do as often correct and improve my Judgment, as his *Verſes* do charm my Fancy; he is every where Sweet, Elegant, and Sublime; the *Poet* and *Critick* were ſeldom both ſo Conſpicuous and Illuſtrious

Illuſtrious in one Man as in *him*, except *Rapin*. Mr. *Rimer* in his incomparable Preface to *Rapin*, and in his *Reflexions* upon ſome late *Tragedies*, hath given ſufficient Proofs, that he hath ſtudied and underſtands *Ariſtotle* and *Horace*, *Homer* and *Virgil*, beſides the *Wits* of all Countries and Ages; ſo that we may juſtly number *him* in the firſt Rank of *Criticks*, as having a moſt accompliſh'd *Idea* of *Poetry*, and the *Stage*.

Dryden remarks, That we are fallen into an Age of Illiterate, Cenſorious, and Detracting People, who thus qualified ſet up for *Criticks*.

In the firſt place, ſays *Dryden*, I muſt take leave to tell them, that they wholly miſtake the nature of *Criticiſm*, who think its buſineſs is principally to find fault. *Criticiſm*, as 'twas firſt inſtituted by *Ariſtotle*, was meant a Standard of judging well. The chiefeſt part of which, is, to obſerve thoſe Excellencies, which ſhould delight a *Reaſonable Reader*. If the Deſign, the Conduct, the Thoughts, and the Expreſſions of a *Poem*, be generally ſuch as proceed from a true *Genius* of *Poetry*; the *Critick* ought to paſs his Judgment in favour of the Author. 'Tis malicious and unmanly to ſnarle at the little lapſes of a Pen, from which *Virgil* himſelf ſtands not exempted. *Horace* acknowledges that honeſt *Homer* nods ſometimes: He is not equally awake in every Line: But he leaves it alſo as a ſtanding Meaſure for our Judgments,

——*Non, ubi plura nitent in Carmine, paucis*
Offendi Maculis, quas aut incuria fudit
Aut humana parum cavit Natura.——

And *Longinus*, who was undoubtedly, after *Ariſtotle*, the greateſt *Critick* among the *Greeks*, in his twenty

ſeventh Chapter περὶ ὕψους, has (ſays *Dryden*) judiciouſly preferr'd the *Sublime Genius that ſometimes errs*, to the *midling* or *indifferent one which makes few faults, but ſeldom or never riſes to an Excellence.* He compares the *firſt* to a Man of large Poſſeſſions, who has not leiſure to conſider of every ſlight Expence, will not debaſe himſelf to the management of every Trifle: Particular Sums are not laid out, or ſpar'd to the greateſt advantage in his Oeconomy: But are ſometimes ſuffer'd to run to waſte, while he is only careful of the Main. *On the other ſide*, he likens the *Mediocrity* of *Wit*, to one of a mean fortune, who manages his Store with extream frugality, or rather parſimony: But who with fear of running into profuſeneſs, never arrives to the Magnificence of Living. This kind of *Genius*, ſays *Dryden*, writes indeed correctly. A wary Man he is in Grammar; very nice as to *Solæciſm* or *Barbariſm*, judges to a hair of little decencies, knows better than any Man, what is not to be written; and never hazards himſelf ſo far as to fall: But plods on deliberately; and as a grave Man ought, is ſure to put his Staff before him; in ſhort, he ſets his heart upon it; and with wonderful care makes his Buſineſs ſure: That is, in plain *Engliſh*, neither to be blam'd, nor prais'd. I could, ſays *Longinus*, find out ſome Blemiſhes in *Homer*: And am perhaps, as naturally inclin'd to be diſguſted at a fault as another Man: But, after all, to ſpeak impartially, his failings are ſuch, as are only Marks of Humane Frailty: They are *little* Miſtakes, or rather Negligencies, which have eſcap'd his Pen in the fervour of his Writing; the Sublimity of his Spirit carries it with me againſt his Careleſſneſs: And tho' *Apollonius's Argonautes*, and *Theocritus's Eidullia*, are more free from Errors, there is not any Man of ſo falſe a Judgment, who

who would chuſe rather to have been *Apollonius* or *Theocritus*, than *Homer*. **Dryd.** *Apology for* Heroick Poetry; *before The* State *of* Innocence.

Ill Writers, ſays *Dryden*, are uſually the ſharpeſt *Cenſors*: For *they* (as the beſt *Poet*, and the beſt *Patron* ſaid,) when in the full perfection of decay, turn *Vinegar*, and come again in Play. Thus the Corruption of a *Poet*, is the Generation of a *Critick*: I mean, ſays *Dryden*, of a *Critick* in the general acceptation of this Age: For formerly they were quite another *Species* of Men. They were Defendors of *Poets*, and Commentators on their Works: To Illuſtrate obſcure Beauties; to place *ſome* paſſages in a better Light, to redeem *Others* from Malicious Interpretations: To help out an Author's Modeſty, who is not oſtentatious of his Wit; and in ſhort, to ſhield him from the ill Nature of thoſe Fellows, who were *then* call'd *Zoili*, and *Momi*, and *now* take upon themſelves the Venerable Name of *Cenſors*. But neither *Zoilus*, nor he who endeavour'd to defame *Virgil*, were ever Adopted into the Name of *Criticks* by the *Ancients*: What *their* Reputation was *then*, We know; and their *Succeſſors* in *this Age* deſerve no better. Are our Auxiliary Forces, ſays *Dryden*, turn'd our Enemies? Are they, who, at beſt, are but Wits of the Second Order, and whoſe only Credit amongſt Readers, is what they obtain'd by being ſubſervient to the Fame of Writers, are theſe become Rebels of Slaves, and Uſurpers of Subjects; Or, to ſpeak in the moſt Honourable Terms of them, are they (ſays *Dryden*) from our Seconds, become Principals againſt us? Does the *Ivy* undermine the *Oak*, which ſupports its weakneſs? What labour wou'd it coſt them to put in a *better Line*, than the *Worſt* of thoſe, which they expunge in a True *Poet*? *Petronius*, the greateſt Wit

perhaps

perhaps of all the *Romans*, yet when his Envy prevail'd upon his Judgment, to fall on *Lucan*, he fell himself in his Attempt: *He* perform'd worse in his Essay of the *Civil War*, than the Author of the *Pharsalia*: And avoiding *his* Errors, has made greater of his own. *Julius Scaliger*, wou'd needs turn down *Homer*, and Abdicate him, after the possession of Three Thousand Years; Has he succeeded in his Attempt? He has indeed shown us some of those Imperfections in him, which are incident to Humane Kind: But who had not rather be that *Homer* than this *Scaliger*? You see the same *Hypercritick*, when he endeavours to mend the beginning of *Claudian*, (a faulty Poet, and living in a Barbarous Age;) yet how short he comes of him, and substitutes such Verses of his own, as deserve the *Ferula*. What a Censure has he made of *Lucan*, that *he rather seems to Bark, than Sing*? Wou'd any but a Dog, have made so snarling a Comparison? One wou'd have thought, he had Learn'd *Latin*, as late as they tell us he did *Greek*: Yet he came off, with a *pace tuâ*, by your good leave, *Lucan*; he call'd him not by those outrageous Names, of *Fool*, *Booby*, and *Blockhead*: He had somewhat more of good Manners, than his *Successors*, as he had much more Knowledge. **Dryd.** Dedic. *to the Lord* Radcliffe, *before The* Examen Poeticum.

They who write ill, and they who ne're durst write,
Turn Criticks, *out of meer Revenge and Spight:*
A Play-House *gives 'em Fame; and up there starts,*
From a mean Fifth rate Wit, a Man of Parts.
Our Author fears those Criticks *as his Fate:*
And those he fears, *by consequence, must* Hate.

For

For they *the Traffick of all Wit, invade;*
As Scriv'ners *draw away the* Bankers *Trade.*
Dryd. Prol. to the 2*d.* Part of the *Conqueſt* of *Granada.*

Each puny Cenſor, *who his skill to boaſt,*
Is cheaply Witty on the Poet's *Coſt.*
No Criticks *Verdict, ſhould, of right, ſtand good,*
They are excepted all as Men of Blood:
And the ſame Law ſhall ſhield them from their Fury,
Which has excluded Butchers *from a* Jury.
You'd all be Wits———
But Writing's tedious, and that way may fail;
The moſt Compendious *Method is to* rail.
Dryd. Prol. to *Secret Love:* Or, The *Maiden Queen.*

Half-Wits *are Fleas; ſo little and ſo light;*
We ſcarce cou'd know they live, *but that they* bite.
Dryd. Prol. to *All for Love.*

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Concerning

Concerning Opera's.

AN *Opera* is a *Poetical* Tale, or Fiction, repreſented by *Vocal* and *Inſtrumental* Muſick, adorn'd with Scenes, Machines, and Dancing. The ſuppos'd Perſons of this Muſical *Drama*, are generally ſupernatural, as *Gods*, and *Goddeſſes*, and *Heroes*, which at leaſt are deſcended from them, and are in due time, to be adopted into their Number. The Subject therefore being extended beyond the Limits of *Humane Nature*, admits of that ſort of Marvellous and Surprizing Conduct, which is rejected in other *Plays*. Humane Impoſſibilities are to be receiv'd, as they are in *Faith*; becauſe where *Gods* are introduc'd, a *Supreme Power* is to be underſtood, and *Second Cauſes* are out of doors: Yet Propriety is to be obſerv'd even *here*. The *Gods* are all to manage their peculiar Provinces; and what was attributed by the *Heathens* to *one* Power, ought not to be perform'd by *any other*. *Phœbus* muſt foretel, *Mercury* muſt charm with his *Caduceus*, and *Juno* muſt reconcile the Quarrels of the *Marriage-Bed*. To conclude, They muſt all act according to their diſtinct and peculiar Characters. If the Perſons repreſented were to ſpeak upon the Stage, it wou'd follow of neceſſity, That the Expreſſions ſhould be Lofty, Figurative, and Majeſtical: But the Nature of an *Opera* denies the frequent uſe of thoſe *Poetical* Ornaments: For *Vocal* Muſick, tho' it often admits a loftineſs of Sound; yet always exacts an harmonious

nious Sweetneſs: Or, to diſtinguiſh yet more juſtly, The Recitative Part of the *Opera* requires a more Maſculine Beauty of Expreſſion and Sound: The *Other*, which (for want of a proper *Engliſh* word) I muſt call *The Songiſh Part*, muſt abound in the ſoftneſs and variety of *Numbers*; its principal Intention, being to pleaſe the *Hearing*, rather than to gratifie the Underſtanding.

It appears indeed prepoſterous at firſt Sight, That *Rhime*, on any Conſideration, ſhould take place of *Reaſon*. But, in order to reſolve the Probleme, this fundamental Propoſition muſt be ſetled, That the firſt Inventors of any Art or Science, provided they have brought it to perfection, are, in reaſon, to give Laws to it; and according to their Model, all after-Undertakers are to build. Thus in *Epick Poetry*, no Man ought to diſpute the Authority of *Homer*, who gave the firſt Being to that Maſter-piece of Art, and endued it with that Form of Perfection in all its Parts, that nothing was wanting to its Excellency. *Virgil* therefore, and thoſe very few who have ſucceeded him, endeavour'd not to introduce or innovate any thing in a Deſign already perfected, but imitated the *Plan* of the *Inventor*; and are only ſo far true *Heroick Poets*, as they have built on the Foundations of *Homer*. Thus *Pindar*, the Author of thoſe *Odes*, (which are ſo admirably reſtor'd by Mr. *Cowley* in our Language,) ought for ever to be the Standard of them; and we are bound according to the practice of *Horace* and Mr. *Cowley*, to Copy him. Now, to apply this *Axiom* to our preſent purpoſe, whoſoever undertakes the Writing of an *Opera*, (which is a Modern

Invention, though built, indeed, on the Foundations of *Ethnick* Worſhip,) is oblig'd to imitate the Deſign of the *Italians*, who have not only invented, but brought to perfection, this ſort of *Dramatick* Muſical Entertainment. I have not been able, ſays *Dryden*, by any ſearch, to get any Light either of the time, when it began, or of the firſt Author: But I have probable Reaſons, which induce me to believe, that ſome *Italians*, having curiouſly obſerv'd the Gallantries of the *Spaniſh Moors* at their *Zambra's*, or Royal Feaſts, where *Muſick*, *Songs*, and *Dancing* were in perfection; together with their *Machines*, which are uſual at their *Sortiia's*, or running at the Ring, and other Solemnities, may poſſibly have refin'd upon thoſe *Moreſque* Divertiſements, and produc'd this delightful Entertainment, by leaving out the Warlike Part of the *Carouſels*, and forming a *Poetical* Deſign for the uſe of the *Machines*, the *Songs*, and *Dances*. But however it began, (for this is only Conjectural,) we know, ſays *Dryden*, that for ſome Centuries, the Knowledge of *Muſick* has flouriſh'd principally in *Italy*, the Mother of Learning and of Arts; that *Poetry* and *Painting* have been *there* reſtor'd, and ſo cultivated by *Italian* Maſters, that all *Europe* has been enrich'd out of their Treaſury; and the other Parts of it, in relation to thoſe delightful Arts, are ſtill as much Provincial to *Italy*, as they were in the time of the *Roman* Empire. Their firſt *Opera's* ſeem to have been intended for the Celebration of the *Marriages* of their *Princes*, or for the Magnificence of ſome general time of Joy. Accordingly the Expences of them were from the Purſe of the *Sovereign*, or of

the

the *Republick*, as they are ſtill practis'd at *Venice*, *Rome*, and other Places at their Carnivals. *Savoy* and *Florence* have often us'd them in their Courts, at the *Weddings* of their *Dukes*: And at *Turin* particularly, was perform'd the *Paſtor Fido*, written by the famous *Guarini*, which is a *Paſtoral Opera* made to Solemnize the *Marriage* of a *Duke* of *Savoy*. The Prologue of it has given the Deſign to all the *French*; which is a *Complement* to the *Sovereign Power* by ſome *God* or *Goddeſſes*; ſo that it looks no leſs, than a kind of *Embaſſie* from *Heaven* to *Earth*. I ſaid in the Beginning of this Diſcourſe, ſays *Dryden*, that the Perſons repreſented in *Opera's*, are generally *Gods*, *Goddeſſes*, and *Heroes* deſcended from them, who are ſuppos'd to be their peculiar Care; which hinders not, but that meaner Perſons may ſometimes gracefully be introduc'd, eſpecially if they have relation to thoſe firſt Times, which *Poets* call the Golden Age: Wherein by reaſon of their Innocence, thoſe *happy Mortals* were ſuppos'd to have had a more familiar Intercourſe with *Superiour Beings*; and therefore *Shepherds* might reaſonably be admitted, as of all *Callings*, the moſt innocent, the moſt happy, and who, by reaſon of the ſpare Time they had, in their almoſt idle Employment, had moſt leiſure to *make Verſes*, and *to be in Love*; without ſomewhat of which *Paſſion*, no *Opera* can poſſibly ſubſiſt.———

Thought and *Elevation of Fancy*, ſays *Dryden*, are not of the nature of *this ſort* of *Writing*: The *neceſſity* of *double Rhimes*, and *ordering* of the *Words* and *Numbers* for the *ſweetneſs* of the *Voice*, are the main Hinges on which an *Opera* muſt move. Dryd. *Pref. to* Albion *and* Albanius.

Dryden, in the *Poſt-ſcript* to the aforeſaid *Preface*, ſays, That poſſibly the *Italians* went not ſo far as *Spain*, for the Invention of their *Opera's*. They might have it in their own Country; and that by gathering up the Shipwrecks of the *Athenian* and *Roman* Theaters; which we know were adorn'd with *Scenes*, *Muſick*, *Dances*, and *Machines*, eſpecially the *Grecian*.

The Author of The *Gentleman's Journal* informs us, That other Nations beſtow the Name of *Opera* only on ſuch *Plays* whereof every Word is *Sung*. But experience (*ſays he*) has taught us, That our *Engliſh Genius* will not reliſh that *perpetual Singing*. He tells us, he dares not accuſe the *Language* for being over-charg'd with *Conſonants*, which may take off the beauties of the *Recitative* Part, though in ſeveral other Countries he has ſeen their *Opera's* ſtill crowded every time, tho' *long*, and almoſt all *Recitative*. It is true, that their *Trio's*, *Chorus's*, lively *Songs* and *Recits* with *Accompaniments* of Inſtruments, *Symphonies*, *Machines*, and Excellent *Dances* make the reſt be born with, and the *one* ſets off the *other*: But our *Engliſh* Gentlemen, when their *Ear* is ſatisfy'd, are deſirous to have their *Mind* pleas'd, and *Muſick* and *Dancing* induſtriouſly intermix'd with *Comedy* or *Tragedy*: I have often obſerv'd, ſays this *Author*, That the Audience is no leſs attentive to ſome extraordinary Scenes of *Paſſion* or *Mirth*, than to what they call *Beaux Endroits*, or the moſt raviſhing part of the *Muſical Performance*: But had thoſe *Scenes*, tho' never ſo well wrought up, been *Sung*, they would have loſt moſt of their Beauty. All this

this however doth not leſſen the power of *Muſick*, for its Charms command our Attention, when us'd in their place, and the admirable *Conſorts* we have in *Charles-Street* and *York-Buildings*, are an undeniable proof of it. But this (ſays our *Author*) ſhows that what is unnatural, as are *Plays* altogether *Sung*, will ſoon make one uneaſie, which *Comedy* or *Tragedy* can never do, unleſs they be bad. Theſe *Opera's* or *Plays* in *Muſick* have been us'd for above a *Century* amongſt the *Italians*; moſt Cities in *Italy* have their *Opera's*, as alſo *Sicily* and *Savoy*. But *Venice* is the place where they are Triumphant. They have *there* moſt *Carnivals*, Nine or Ten *Opera's* on ſeven ſeveral Stages, and each houſe ſtriving to out-do the reſt, the *Muſick* and *Voices* are always extraordinary. 'Tis almoſt incredible (ſays our *Author*) how one ſingle Town can furniſh them with Spectators: Yet all theſe Preparations are only for the *Carnaval*, and laſt but two Months, and ſome of the *Women* that *Sing* have four hundred *Piſtols* paid them for that time; they never want Excellent *Trebles*, for many are made *Eunuchs* for that purpoſe, though it is very ridiculous to ſee thoſe Effeminate Fellows with their *Moſſy Chins*, play a *Hero's* or a *Lover's* part, which they mar by their cold liveleſs way of Acting. They have little or no *Machines* there; their *Decorations* and *Cloaths* are but mean, and their *Stages* but ill Illuminated, but their *Muſick* makes amends for the Reſt: Yet tho' Strangers cannot but admire it, they find, as Mr. *Dryden* ingeniouſly obſerves upon another Subject, That *it is not pleaſant to be tickled too long*, and wiſh for the Concluſion uſually before the

Opera

Opera be half done. **Gentleman's** *Journal, January*, 169½.

Horace was very angry with thoſe *empty Shows* and Vanity, which the Gentlemen of his time ran like mad after.

——— *Inſanos Oculos, & gaudia Vana.*

But, ſays *Rimer*, what would *he* have ſaid to the *French Opera* of late ſo much in Vogue? There it is for you to bewitch your *Eyes*, and to charm your *Ears*. There is a *Cup* of *Enchantment*, there is *Muſick* and *Machine*; *Circe* and *Calipſo* in Conſpiracy againſt *Nature* and good *Senſe*. 'Tis a *Debauch* the moſt inſinuating, and the moſt pernicious; none would think an *Opera* and *Civil Reaſon*, ſhould be the growth of one and the ſame Climate. But (ſays *Rimer*) ſhall we wonder at any thing for a Sacrifice to the *Grand Monarch*? ſuch Worſhip, ſuch Idol. All Flattery to him is inſipid, unleſs it be prodigious: Nothing Reaſonable, or within Compaſs, can come near the Matter. All muſt be monſtrous, enormous, and outragious to Nature, to be like him, or give any *Eccho* on his Appetite. Were *Rabelais* alive again, he would look on his *Garagantua*, as but a *Pygmy*.

The Heroes Race excels the Poet's Thought.

The *Academy Royal*, ſays *Rimer*, may pack up their Modes and Methods, & *penſées ingenieuſes*; the *Racines* and the *Corneilles* muſt all now dance to the Tune

Tune of *Baptiſta*. Here is the *Opera*; here is *Machine* and *Baptiſta*, farewel *Apollo* and the *Muſes*.

Away with your *Opera* from the Theatre, ſays *Rimer*; better had they become the *Heathen* Temples, or the *Corybantian Prieſts*, and (*Semiviros Gallos*) the old *Capons* of *Gaul*, than a People that pretend from *Charlemayn*, or deſcend from the undoubted Loyns of *Germain* and *Norman* Conquerors. **Rimer**'s *Short View of* Tragedy, *chap.* 1. *pag.* 9, 10.

Concerning Farce.

ALL other *Species* of *Dramatique Poetry*, have their due Reſpect amongſt us; but I know not, ſays *Tate*, by what fate *Farce* is lookt upon to be ſo mean and inconſiderable. If it were to be judg'd by the Difficulty of the Work, we ſhould ſoon change our Notion. I know it is generally ſuppos'd an eaſie Task, but it is ſuch an Eaſineſs as is well deſcrib'd by *Horace*,

> ——*Ut ſibi Quivis*
> *Speret Idem, ſudet multùm, fruſtraq; laboret,*
> *Auſus Idem*——

Or, as the Words are render'd with advantage by his Incomparable *Tranſlator*, the *Earl* of *Roſcommon*,

That

That ev'ry One will think to write the ſame,
And not without much Pains be undeceiv'd.

The Reaſon (ſays *Tate*) I preſume to be this, (and I am certain the Undertaker will find it true) that *Tragedy*, *Comedy*, and *Paſtoral* it ſelf, ſubſiſt upon *Nature*: So that whoſoever has a *Genius* to Copy *Her*, is aſſur'd of Succeſs, and all the World affords him Subject: Whereas the Buſineſs of *Farce* is to exceed *Nature* and *Probability*. But then there are ſo few Improbabilities that will appear Pleaſant, and ſo much nicety requir'd in the management, that the Performance will be found extreamly difficult. **Nathaniel Tate**'s *Pref. to* A Duke *and* No Duke.

That I admire not any *Comedy* equally with *Tragedy*, ſays *Dryden*, is, perhaps, from the ſullenneſs of my humour; but that I deteſt thoſe *Farces*, which are now the moſt frequent Entertainments of the Stage, I am ſure I have Reaſon on my ſide. *Comedy* conſiſts, though of low Perſons, yet of Natural Actions, and Characters, I mean ſuch Humours, Adventures, and Deſigns, as are to be found and met with in the World. *Farce*, on the other ſide, conſiſts of forc'd Humours, and unnatural Events: *Comedy* preſents us with the Imperfections of Humane Nature: *Farce* entertains us with what is monſtrous and Chimerical: The *one* cauſes laughter in thoſe who can judge of Men and Manners; by the lively Repreſentation of their folly or corruption; the *other* produces the ſame Effect in thoſe who can judge of neither, and that only by its extravagances. The *firſt* Works on the Judgment and Fancy;

Fancy; the *latter* on the Fancy only: There is more of Satisfaction in the *former* kind of laughter, and in the *latter* more of Scorn. But, how it happens, that an impoſſible Adventure ſhould cauſe our Mirth, I cannot (ſays *Dryden*) ſo eaſily imagine. Something there may be in the oddneſs of it, becauſe on the Stage it is the common Effect of things unexpected to ſurprize us into a delight: And that is to be aſcrib'd to the ſtrange appetite, as I may call it, of the Fancy; which, like that of a *Longing Woman*, often runs out into the moſt extravagant deſires; and is better ſatisfy'd ſometimes with Loam, or with the Rinds of Trees, than with the wholſome nouriſhments of Life. In ſhort, ſays *Dryden*, there is the ſame difference betwixt *Farce* and *Comedy*, as betwixt an *Empirick* and a *true Phyſician*: Both of them may attain their Ends; but what the *one* performs by *hazard*, the *other* does by *skill*. And as the *Artiſt* is often ſucceſsleſs, while the *Mountebank* ſucceeds; ſo *Farces* more commonly take the *People* than Comedies. For to write *unnatural* things, is the moſt probable way of pleaſing them, who underſtand not *Nature*. And a true Poet often miſſes of applauſe, becauſe he cannot debaſe himſelf to Write ſo ill as to pleaſe his Audience. Dryd. *Pref. to the* Mock-Aſtrologer.

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Characters

CHARACTERS AND CENSURES.

Æſchylus.

ÆSCHYLUS an *Athenian* Tragic *Poet*, born in the Village of *Eleuſis*; Cotemporary with *Pindar*, in the Sixty Ninth *Olympiad*, according to the Old *Scholiaſt*, but as Mr. *Stanly* in his moſt accurate Edition of this Author makes out by diligent Computation, and his Collection out of Mr. *Selden's Marmora Arundeliana*, in the Sixty Third. The Son of *Euphorion*, and Brother of *Cynegyrus* and *Aminias*, who Signaliz'd themſelves in the Battle of *Marathon*, and the Sea-Fight of *Salamis*, in which our *Poet* alſo was preſent. Of Sixty Six *Drama's*, which he Wrote, (being Victor in 13) and Five *Satyrs*, we have Extant only Seven *Tragedies*, his *Prometheus Vinctus*, his *Septem Duces contra Thebas*, *Agamemnon*, *Perſæ*, *Eumenides*, *Choephori*, *Supplices*. But though he was *Victor* 13 times, yet it is ſaid, he took it ſo to heart to be Vanquiſht by *Sophocles*, then a Young man, that he left his Country, and betook himſelf to *Hiero* King of *Sicily*, where he made his Tragedy *Ætna*, ſo call'd from the City of that Name, which

Hiero was then Building, ſo named from the Mountain: Others ſay, it was becauſe he was Vanquiſht by *Simonides* in his *Elegiac* Verſe upon the Slain at *Marathon.* After he had been Reſident at *Gela* Three Years, he dyed of a Fracture of his Skull, caus'd by an *Eagles* letting fall a *Shell-Fiſh* out of his Claw upon his Bald-Head, which ſeems to have been Portended by the *Oracle*, which being conſulted upon the manner of his Death, Anſwer'd, Ὀυφάνιον σὲ βέλος καταχταν̃ει, this happen'd in the Sixty Ninth Year of his Age, according to *Stanley.*

He is mention'd by *Horace* as the firſt that Beautified and Adorn'd the Stage.

> *Next,* Æſchylus *the different Perſons plac'd,*
> *And with a better Maſque his Players grac'd:*
> *Upon a* Theatre *his Verſe expreſs'd,*
> *And ſhow'd his* Hero *with a Buskin dreſs'd.*
>
> **Boileau's** *Art of* Poetry, *pag.* 33.

Rimer ſays, That at *Athens* (they tell us) the Tragedies of *Æſchylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*, were Enroll'd with their *Laws*, and made part of their *Statute-Book.* **Rym.** *Short View of* Tragedy, *pag.* 158.

Dryden tells us, That the *Poet Eſchylus* was held in the ſame Veneration by the *Athenians* of After-Ages, as *Shakeſpear* is with us; and *Longinus* has judg'd in favour of him, that he had a noble Boldneſs of Expreſſion, and that his Imaginations were Lofty and Heroick: But on the other ſide *Quintilian* affirms, That he was daring to Extravagance. 'Tis certain, ſays *Dryden*, that he affected Pompous Words, and that his Senſe too often was obſcur'd by Figures: But notwithſtanding theſe Imperfections, the Value of his Writings after his Deceaſe was ſuch, that his Country-men Ordain'd an equal

Reward

Reward to thoſe Poets, who could alter his Plays to be Acted on the Theatre, with thoſe whoſe Productions were wholly new, and of their own.

Æſchylus Writ nothing in Cold Blood, but was always in a Rapture, and in fury with his Audience: The Inſpiration was ſtill upon him, he was ever tearing it upon the *Tripos*; or (to run off as madly as *he* does, from one *Similitude* to another) he was always at *high flood* of *Paſſion*, even in the dead *Ebb*, and loweſt *Water-Mark* of the Scene. **Dryd.** *Pref. to* Troilus *and* Creſſida.

Rapin Remarks, That *Æſchylus* had ſcarce any Principle for *Manners*, and for the *Decencies*; his *Fables* are too Simple, the *Contrivance* Wretched, the *Expreſſion* Obſcure and intricate; One can ſcarce Uuderſtand any thing of his Tragedy of *Agamemnon*. But becauſe he believ'd, that the Secret of the *Theatre* is to ſpeak *Pompouſly*, he beſtow'd all his Art on the *Words*, without any regard to the *Thoughts*. *Quintilian* ſays, That he is Sublime and Lofty to Extravagance: Indeed, ſays *Rapin*, he never Speaks in *Cold-Blood*, and ſays the moſt indifferent things in a *Tragic Huff*; Likewiſe in the Images that he Draws, the Colours are too *glaring*, and the Strokes too groſs. He, who Writes his Life, Relates that in one of the *Chorus*'s of his Tragedy of the *Eumenides*, he ſo horribly frighted the *Audience*, that the Spectacle made the Children Swound, and the Women with Child miſcarry. To *Conclude*, his *Enthuſiaſm*, it ſeems, never left him, he is ſo Exalted, and ſo little Natural. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtotle's *Book of* Poeſie, *part* 2. *Sect.* xxii.

Borrichius obſerves, That *Æſchylus* was very full of his *Metaphors*, which indeed deſerve our praiſe, but yet, *he ſays*, they had been much more Commendable, if he had not broke off ſo abrubtly in them.

He alſo takes notice, That his *Epithets* are for the moſt part *bold*, and *daring*, as too much ſavouring of his former Profeſſion, that of a *Souldier.* **Borrich.** *Diſſert. de* Poetis, *pag.* 29.

The Author of the *Journal des Sçavans*, ſays, That *Æſchylus* is a Poet ſo hard to be Underſtood, that even *Salmaſius*, who was an excellent *Critick*, and whoſe chief delight lay in clearing the difficult Places of the moſt *Abſtruſe Authors*, was mightily puzzl'd, and perplext, at the difficulties he met with in *Æſchylus*: Which gave him occaſion, in one of his Books, to ſay, That *this Poet is more obſcure than the* Scripture *it ſelf.*

The ſame Author of the *Journal* obſerves, That *Æſchylus*, in his Style, flies ſo very High, and uſes ſuch Lofty Expreſſions, that *Monſieur le Fevre*, in his *Abridgment* of the *Lives* of the *Greek Poets*, affirms this to be the only Reaſon of his having the Reputation of a *Drunkard*: As if his Diſcourſe ſeem'd rather to proceed from the *Fumes* of *Wine*, than from *Solid Reaſon.* But to Conclude, *our Author* tells us, there are very Fine and Curious Things to be found in *this Poet*, and that among all the Ancient *Tragick Poets*, the *Greeks* had the greateſt Value for *him.* **Gallois** *Journ. des* Sçav. *du* 2. *Mars*, 1665.

Ælian, in his *Various Hiſtory*, relates, That *Æſchylus*, being accus'd for ſome Impiety in one of his Plays, was Condemn'd to be Ston'd. Whereupon his Younger Brother *Aminias*, ſhewing his Arm without a hand, which he had loſt at the Battle at *Salamis*, did ſo far influence the *Judges*, that in a grateful Memory of his good Services, they preſently order'd *Æſchylus* to be diſmiſt. **Elian.** *lib.* 5. *cap.* xix.

Anacre-

Anacreon.

Anacreon was born in *Teos*, a place in the middle of *Ionia*; He flouriſht in the 61, and 62 *Olympiad*, as *Euſebius*, and *Suidas* affirm. He was one of the Nine *Lyricks*: And both in his Writings, and whole manner of Life, a merry *Greek*, wanton and amorous. He was very intimate with *Polycrates*, the Tyrant of *Samos*; whom he alſo celebrates in his Verſes. Though aged, he fell in love with *Bathyllus*, a young Boy, of whoſe hard-heartedneſs he complains. He wrote in the *Ionick* Dialect.

Several of his Poems are yet extant, moſt whereof conſiſt of *Drunken Catches*, *Billets doux*, *&c.*

Monſieur *Bayle* ſays, That *Sappho* and *Anacreon* are ſo very much alike in their Humours, and their way of Writing, that it is ſomewhat difficult to diſtinguiſh the *One* from the *Other*. 'Tis pity, *ſays he*, that they were not co-temporaries, for if they had, they ought to have been *Husband* and *Wife*, that ſo the World might have ſeen the effect of two ſuch *Amorous*, and *Delicate* Souls. Nouvelles *de la Republique des Lettres*, Novemb. 1684.

Julius Scaliger had ſo high a value for this Poet, That he tells us, He thought *Anacreon*'s Verſes ſweeter than the beſt *Indian Sugar*. *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 44. *Poëtices.*

Ælian, in his *Various Hiſtory*, tells us, That *Hipparchus*, Eldeſt Son of *Piſiſtratus*, and the wiſeſt of all the *Athenians*, did ſo highly eſteem *Anacreon*, that He ſent a Gally of fifty Oars to him, with the moſt obliging Letters in the World, to invite him to *Athens*. *Lib.* 8. *Cap.* 2.

Gerardus

Gerardus Johannes Voſſius, in his *Inſtitutionum Poeticarum*, *lib.* 3. *pag.* 78. aſſures us, That *Anacreon* paſs'd amongſt the *Greeks* for one of the greateſt Maſters, both in the Art of *Complaiſance*, and in the *Softneſs of Expreſſion.*

Mademoiſelle le Fevre, in the *Preface* to her curious Edition of *Anacreon*, ſays, That his Beauty, and chiefeſt Excellency lay in imitating *Nature*, and in following *Reaſon*; that he preſented not to the Mind, any *Images*, but ſuch as were *Noble* and *Natural*; and that he always took great care to avoid the *Points*, which were introduc'd in the latter times, contrary to the Practice of all the beſt Ancient Poets.

Athenæus, that famous Ancient *Critick*, in his *Dipnoſophiſt*, remarks, That notwithſtanding the Beauty of *Anacreon's* Verſe, yet every body could not reliſh him, for that his *Odes* were no other than *Drunken Catches*; and that at the ſame time he commended *Drunkenneſs*, he would often be ſo very *Obſcene*, that he was not to be endur'd by the *Vertuous* part of Mankind.

He further *adds*, That *Anacreon* had one humour very ridiculous, which was, that if by great chance it happen'd, he was ſober at the time he *Compos'd* his *Verſes*, yet, tho' there was no occaſion for it, he would be ſure to feign himſelf *Drunk.*

Rapin tells us, That *Anacreon's Odes* are Flowers, Beauties, and perpetual Graces; and that it is ſo familiar to him to write what is *Natural*, and to the *Life*; he having an *Air* ſo delicate, ſo eaſie, and ſo graceful; that among all the *Ancients* there is nothing comparable to the method he took, nor to that kind of Writiug he follow'd. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtotle's *Treat. of Poeſie*, *part* 2*d. Sect. xxx.*

Anacreon

Anacreon, in the Eighty Fifth Year of his Age, was choak'd with a *Grape-Stone.* Which gave occaſion to *Abraham Cowley*, to exerciſe his Wit in theſe following Lines:

And whilſt I do thus diſcover
Th' Ingredients of a happy Lover,
'Tis my Anacreon, *for thy ſake,*
I of the Grape *no mention make.*
Till my Anacreon *by* Thee *fell,*
Curſed Plant, *I lov'd thee well,*
And 'twas oft my wanton uſe
To dip my Arrows *in thy juice.*
Curſed Plant, *'tis true, I ſee,*
The Old report that goes of Thee,
That with Gyants *blood the Earth*
Stain'd and poys'ned gave Thee *birth,*
And now thou wreak'ſt thy ancient ſpight,
On Men *in whom* the Gods *delight.*

Cowley's Elegy *upon* Anacreon.

Apollonius Rhodius.

HE was *Callimachus*'s Scholar; although *Alexandria* was his Countrey, yet he was call'd *Rhodius*, after he came from *Alexandria* to *Rhode*, and liv'd there a long time in great honour. Some tell us, that he ſucceeded *Eratoſthenes* as Library-Keeper at *Alexandria*, in the Reign of *Ptolomy Evergetes.*

He wrote ſeveral Pieces, but there are none left, only his *Argonautica* in four Books.

Quintilian

Quintilian, in his *Inſtitut. Oratoriar. lib. X. Cap.* 1. ſays, That *Apollonius*'s *Argonautica* is no contemptible work; and that in his Stile he obſerves an exact *Medium*, which is neither too lofty, nor too mean.

Longinus, in his Treatiſe περὶ ὕψους, is much of the ſame opinion with *Quintilian*, for he tells us, That *Apollonius* in his *Argonautica* never riſes too high, or falls too low, but that he poiſes himſelf very exactly; But yet, for all this good Quality, *he thinks* he is infinitely ſhort of *Homer*, take him with all his faults; inaſmuch as the ſublime, lofty Style, though ſubject to *unevenneſſes*, is to be preferr'd before any other ſort.

Lilius Gyraldus, ſpeaking of the *Argonautica*, ſays, It is a work full of variety, and a very laborious piece; but yet he owns, that in ſome places it is rough and unpleaſant, but not where he deſcribes the *Amours* of *Medea*, for even there *Virgil* thinks him ſo tranſcendent, that *he* has Copied many things from thence, inſerting them into his own *Amours* of *Dido*. **Gyrald.** *de Hiſt. Poët. Dialog.* 3.

Tanaguy le Fevre, in his *Abridgment* of the *Lives* of the *Greek* Poets, *pag.* 147. agrees with *Gyraldus* in what he ſays relating to *Virgil*; but he can by no means yield to *Longinus*'s Opinion, who affirm'd, that never any Man could find fault with the *Oeconomy* of that Work. *He* laughs alſo at thoſe Criticks, who think, that the Stile is ſo very equal, ſoft and eaſie, ſaying, That he could never be brought to be of their Judgment; for that, as little as *he* underſtood *Greek*, he thought *he* could diſcern ſome difference of *Characters*.

Claudius Verderius, in his *Cenſio Auctorum*, *pag.* 46. ſays, That in the eſteem of many Perſons, the ſtile of *Apollonius* was look'd upon to be courſe and unpoliſh'd,

and

and that he himſelf ſaw it ridicul'd upon that very ſcore.

Hence therefore *Borrichius* in his *Diſſertat. de Poetis, pag.* 15. tells us, That *Apollonius* finding, that the Verſes which he had made in his Youth, were derided and exploded, as not being poliſh'd enough, he afterwards gave them a new *turn*, by which means they were thought ſo polite, as to deſerve all Mens Applauſe.

Rapin, in the 2*d.* part of his *Reflex.* on *Ariſtot.* Treatiſe of Poeſie, *Sect. XV.* remarks, That the Poem of *Apollonius Rhodius*, on the *Expedition* of the *Argonauts*, is of a ſlender Character, and has nothing of that nobleneſs of expreſſion, which *Homer* has; that the *Fable* is ill invented, and the Liſt of the *Argonauts* in the firſt Book *Flat.*

Aratus

WAS born at *Soli* or *Soloe*, a Town of *Cilicia*, afterwards call'd *Pompeiopolis*; he was Phyſician to *Antigonus*, King of *Macedon*; A moſt learned Poet, and one that wrote diverſe things, amongſt others a Book of *Aſtronomy*, called φαινόμενα, in which he elegantly deſcribes in *Heroick* Verſe the whole Frame of the *Celeſtial Sphere*, the Image, Figure, Riſing and Setting of all the Stars therein. *He* flouriſh'd in the time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, in the *cxxvi. Olympiad.*

Claudius and *Germanicus Cæſar*, were ſo delighted with *Aratus*'s φαινόμενα, that they, each of Them, Tranſlated it into *Latin*: As did alſo *M. Tullius Cicero*, when he was

very young. And beſide theſe, *Feſtus Avienus* turn'd it into Elegant *Latin* Verſe.

Ovid, ſpeaking of this Author, gives us *his* Character in theſe words, alluding to his φαινόμενα :

Cum Sole & Lunâ *ſemper* Aratus *erit.*

Viz. That as long as *Sun* and *Moon* endur'd, ſo long would the Fame of *Aratus* continue.

Cicero, in his firſt Book *De Oratore*, tells us, That the Verſes of *Aratus* were very fine and Elegant, but that he had little skill in *Aſtrology.*

Quintilian, in his *Inſtiſtution Oratoriar. lib.* x. *cap.* 1. ſays, That the Verſes of *Aratus* are without Life or Spirit, and that they have not thoſe Ornaments, nor that *Poetical* variety, which uſes to affect the *Reader:* And yet *he tells us*, He was a perſon proper enough for the Work he undertook.

Gerardus Voſſius, in his Book *De Scientiis Mathematicis*, affirms, That *Aratus was* formerly, and *is* ſtill, of very great Authority among *Aſtronomers.*

The Authority of *Aratus* was eſteem'd ſo ſacred among the *Ancients*, that we find him quoted by St. *Paul* himſelf, *Acts* the *xvii. Verſe* the 28.

There is not any thing a greater Demonſtration of the Credit of *this* Author, than the vaſt Number of his *Commentators.*

Macrobius, in his *Saturnal. lib.* v. *cap* 2. ſays, That *Virgil* in his *Georgicks* borrow'd ſeveral Things from *Aratus*'s φαινόμενα.

Ariſtophanes

Ariſtophanes.

Ariſtophanes was a famous Comick Poet, but of his Country nothing is certain: *Some* ſay he was an *Athenian*, others a *Rhodian*, and ſome an *Egyptian*. He was contemporary with *Sophocles* the *Tragick* Poet, and alſo with *Socrates*, whom he makes an Object of his Wit in his *Comedy* call'd *Nubes*; as he doth *Cleon* and *Nicias*, two Magiſtrates of *Athens*, in his *Equites* and *Georgia*; He flouriſh'd from the *Eighty fifth* to the *Ninety firſt* Olympiad, and wrote, according to *Suidas*, no leſs than *fifty four Comedies*, whereof we have now but *Eleven* left, *viz. Plutus*, *Nubes*, *Ranæ*, *Equites*, *Acharnenſes*, *Veſpæ*, *Aves*, *Pax*, *Concionatriſes*, *Cerealia Feſta celebrantes*, *Lyſiſtrata*. To conclude, *He* was the chief Writer of the *Old* Comedy, as *Menander* of the *New*.

In *this* Author are to be found all the Ornaments of the *Attick Dialect*, which made St. *Chryſoſtome* ſo much admire him, that whenever he went to ſleep, he ſtill laid him under his Pillow.

Let no Man, ſays *Joſeph Scaliger*, in the firſt part of *Scaligerana*, pretend to underſtand the *Attick Dialect*, who has not *Ariſtophanes* at his fingers ends. *pag.* 23.

Tanaquillus Faber, in his *Notes* upon the fore-mention'd place, tells us, how much he is in love with *Scaliger* for ſaying this. The truth on't is, ſays *Faber*, I have ſpent above fifteen Years to underſtand this Author, nor do I think I have cauſe to repent it.

Lilius Gyraldus informs us, That *Ariſtophanes* was reputed the moſt Eloquent of all the *Athenians*, and that they look'd upon him to be the moſt Conſiderable of their *Beaux Eſprits*; *That* he abounds with fine, cu-

rious Sentences; *That* there is in his Invention a variety that is ſurpriſing, but yet agreeable; and, *that* he underſtood how to give every thing its *turn*, which, as *Gyraldus* tells us, gave him the preference from all the other *Comick* Poets.

Mademoiſelle le Fevre, in the *Preface* to her Edition of *Ariſotaphenes*, remarks, that one may find in this Author, ſome Inſtructions, that may be of great uſe both to the *Politician* and the *Souldier*. For it ſeems, theſe *Comedies* of *his*, did as it were repreſent to the *Athenians* the whole State of their Affairs. And therefore well might *Plato*, writing to *Dionyſius* the *Tyrant*, tell him, That if he had a mind to have an exact Scheme of the Condition of the *Athenians*, he need only read the Works of *Ariſtophanes*.

He aſſembl'd his Spectators, ſays *Mademoiſelle le Fevre*, not to fawn upon them and flatter them, or to divert them with Buffoonry and Fooleries; but to give 'em ſolid Inſtructions, which he knew how to make them reliſh, by ſeaſoning them with a thouſand pleaſant Inventions, which no body but himſelf was able to do.

Never any Man, ſays the ſame *le Fevre* in her ſaid *Preface*, had better skill in diſcerning the *Ridiculous* part, nor a *turn* more Ingenious to make it appear. His *Criticks* are natural and eaſie; and, which does not often happen, notwithſtanding he is ſo Copious, he ſtill ſuſtains the delicacy of his Character.

She adds, That the *Attick Spirit*, which the *Ancients* have ſo much bragg'd of, appears more in *Ariſtophanes*, than in any other Author of Antiquity, that *She* knows of; but, that what is moſt to be admir'd in him, is, that he is always ſo abſolute a *Maſter* of the *Matter* he treats of, that, with all the eaſe imaginable, he finds a way how

how to make thoſe very things, which at firſt might appear the moſt remote from his *Subject*, fall in naturally; and, that, even his moſt lively, and leaſt expected *Caprices*, ſeem'd but as the natural Reſults of thoſe *Incidents* he had prepar'd.

She further *tells* us, That nothing can be more Ingenious, than the whole Contexture of the *Comedy* call'd *Nubes*; And that the chief thing therein, which *She* moſt admires at, is, That *Ariſtophanes* has ſo well hit the *Air* and *Humour* of *Socrates* in the *Ridiculous* part; which is done ſo *naturally*, that a Man would really think he heard *Socrates* himſelf ſpeak. *She ſays*, ſhe was ſo much Charm'd with this Piece, that after ſhe had Tranſlated it, and had read it two hundred times over, ſhe did not find her ſelf in the leaſt cloy'd, which was more than ſhe could ſay of any other Piece beſides.

To conclude, *Mademoiſelle le Fevre* ſpeaking of the *Style* of *Ariſtophanes*, ſays, *This* is as agreeable as his *Wit*. For beſides its purity, force, and ſweetneſs, it has a certain Harmony, which ſounds ſo pleaſant to the Ear, that the very *Reading* him is extreamly delightful. At any time, when he has occaſion to make uſe of the common ordinary Stile, he does it without uſing any Expreſſion that is baſe and vulgar; and when he has a mind to expreſs himſelf in the lofty *Style*, in his higheſt flight he is never obſcure; In a word, *She tells* us, No perſon ever underſtood how to make uſe of all the different Sorts of *Style*, like *Ariſtophanes*. **Anm. le Fevre's** *Pref.* to her *French Tranſlat.* of the Two *Comedies* of *Ariſtophanes*.

Rimer tells us, That *Ariſtophanes* was a Man of wonderful Zeal for Vertue, and the good of his Countrey; *that* he laid about him with an undaunted Reſolution, as

it

it were ſome *Chriſtian Martyr*, for his Faith and Religion. He plainly *ran a Muck* at all manner of Vice where ever he ſaw it, be it in the greateſt *Philoſophers*, the greateſt *Poets*, the *Generals*, or the *Miniſters* of *State.*

The *Perſian* Ambaſſador, who was *Lieger* there (as formerly the *French* with us) ſeeing the Town all at his beck; and the *Government* taking Aim, Turning out, Diſgracing, Impeaching, Baniſhing, Out-Lawing, and Attainting the *great Men*, according as he hinted, or held up the Finger; the Ambaſſador, not underſtanding the *Athenian* Temper, ſays *Rimer*, was aſtoniſh'd at the *Man.* And, for all the *Democracy*, no leſs bold was he with his *Soveraign, Legiſlative People*: Repreſenting them, taking Bribes, ſelling their Votes, bought off. He tells 'em (as the practice amongſt them) that the *Government* had no occaſion for Men of *Wit* or *Honeſty.* The moſt Ignorant, the moſt Impudent, and the greateſt Rogue ſtood faireſt always for a Place, and the beſt qualified to be their Chief Miniſter. *He* tells 'em, nothing ſhall fright him; *Truth* and *Honeſty* are on his ſide; he has the *Heart* of *Hercules*, will ſpeak what is Juſt and Generous, tho' *Cerberus*, and all the Kennel of Hell-Hounds were loo'd upon him. But then (ſays *Rimer*) his Addreſs was Admirable: He would make the Truth Viſible and Palpable, and every way ſenſible to them. The Art and the Application; his ſtrange Fetches, his lucky Stars; his odd Inventions, the wild Turns, Returns, and Counter-turns (ſays *Rimer*) were never match'd, nor are ever to be reach'd again. **Rim.** *Short View of* **Tragedy**, *chap.* 2. *pag.* 22, 23.

Rapin Remarks, That *Ariſtophanes* is not exact in the Contrivance of his *Fables*, and *that* his *Fictions* are not very probable; that he Mocks Perſons too groſely,

groſely, and too openly. *Socrates*, whom he Plays upon ſo eagerly in his *Comedies*, (ſays *Rapin*) had a more delicate *Air* of *Raillery* than he; but was not ſo ſhameleſs. It is true, *Ariſtophanes* Writ during the Diſorder and Licentiouſneſs of the *Old Comedy*, and that he underſtood the Humour of the *Athenian* People, who were eaſily diſguſted with the Merit of extraordiary Perſons, whom he ſet his Wit to abuſe, that he might pleaſe *that People*. After all, ſays *Rapin*, he often is no otherwiſe pleaſant, than by his Buffoonry. That *Ragouſt*, Compos'd of Seventy Six Syllables in the laſt Scene of his *Comedy* the *Eccleſiaſouſai*, would not (ſays *Rapin*) go down with us in our Age. His Language is often obſcure, blunder'd, low, trivial; and his frequent jingling upon Words, his Contradictions of oppoſite Terms each to other; the Hotchpotch of his Stile, of *Tragick* and *Comick*, of Serious and Buffoon, of Grave and Familiar, is unſeemly; and his *Witticiſms* often, when well Examin'd, prove falſe. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *Treatiſe of* Poeſie, *par.* 2. *ſect.* XXVI.

Ariſtotle,

THE Famous Philoſopher of *Stagira*; who, beſides the many other Works he Wrote, is ſaid, according to *Diogenes Laertius*, to have Written as many *Poems*, as contain Forty Five Thouſand, Three Hundred, and Thirty Verſes. But had he never Compos'd any *Poem*, yet certainly that moſt Incomparable Piece of *His*, concerning the *Art* of *Poetry*, which by all the World is counted

counted the beſt *Model* for *Poets* to follow, may well allow him to be Rank'd amongſt the moſt Conſiderable *Poets.*

He Died, according to *Calvicius*, in the Sixty Third Year of his Age, Three Hundred and Ninteen Years before *Chriſt.*

I find there are ſome *Criticks*, and among others *Petrus Victorius*, in his *Comment* upon *Ariſtotle's* Art of *Poetry*, who think, that this Piece of *Ariſtotle's* was never finiſh'd, nor perfected; and, in all probability, the ground of this Opinion, was, becauſe they did not find, that *Ariſtotle* had writ any thing concerning *Comedy*, as a late *Anonymous* Author has obſerv'd in his *Bibliograph. curioſ. Hiſtor. Philolog.* &c. *pag.* 45. But the Learned *Gerardus Johannes Voſſius*, in his *De Natura Artis Poeticæ*, *cap.* v. *pag.* 28. is of the contrary Opinion, *viz.* That *Ariſtotle* had finiſh'd, and given the laſt ſtrokes to this moſt Excellent Work; And this, ſays *Voſſius*, may eaſily be prov'd by that *curious Method*, and *admirable concatenation*, which he hath obſerv'd from firſt to laſt.

Lilius Gyraldus tells us, That *Ariſtotle* was not only the *Maſter* and *Patriarch* of *Philoſophy*, *Logick*, and *Rhetorick*, but alſo, that he was greatly skill'd in *Poetry*, both in reſpect of the *Art*, and the *Compoſing* of *Verſes.*

Rimer ſays, That *Ariſtotle* was the very firſt that Antiquity honour'd with the Name of Critick.

It is indeed ſuſpected, that he dealt not always fairly with the *Philoſophers*, miſ-reciting ſometimes, and miſinterpreting their Opinions. But (ſays *Rimer*) I find him not tax'd of that injuſtice to the *Poets*, in whoſe favour he is ſo Ingenious, that to the diſadvantage of his own Profeſſion, he declares, That *Tragedy more conduces to*

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the Inſtruction of Mankind, than even Philoſophy it ſelf. And hower *Ariſtotle* may be cry'd down in the *Schools*, and vilified by ſome Modern Philoſophers; yet ſince Men have had a taſte for *good Senſe*, and could diſcern the Beauties of correct Writing, *he* is preferr'd in the *politeſt* Courts of *Europe*, and by the *Poet*'s held in great Veneration. Not that *theſe* can ſervilely yield to his Authority, who, of all Men living, affect Liberty. The truth is, (ſays *Rimer*) what *Ariſtotle* Writes on this Subject, are not the Dictates of his own *Magiſterial-Will*, or dry Deductions of his *Metaphyſicks*? But the *Poets* were his Maſters, and what was *their* Practice, *he* reduced to Principles. Nor would the *Modern Poets*, blindly reſign to this Practice of the *Ancients*, were not the Reaſons convincing and clear as any Demonſtration in *Mathematicks*. 'Tis only needful that we underſtand them, for our Conſent to the Truth of them. **Rim.** *Pref. to his* Tranſlat. *of* Rapin's *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *of* Poeſie.

Rapin tells us, That *Ariſtotle's* Treatiſe of *Poeſie*, to ſpeak properly, is nothing elſe, but *Nature* put in Method, and *good Senſe* reduc'd to Principles. There is no arriving at Perfection but by *theſe* Rules, and they certainly go aſtray that take a different Courſe. What faults have not moſt of the *Italian*, *Spaniſh*, and other *Poets* fallen into, through their Ignorance of theſe Principles? And if a *Poem*, (ſays *Rapin*) made by *theſe* Rules, fails of Succeſs, the fault lies not in the *Art*, but in the *Artiſt*; all who have Writ of this *Art*, have follow'd no other *Idea*, but that of *Ariſtotle*. **Rap.** Advertiſm. *before his* Reflex. *on* Ariſt.

The Learned *Anonymous German* Author, in his *Bibliograph. Curios. Histor. Philolog.* &c. *pag.* 45. calls *Aristotle's* Art of *Poetry* a Golden Fragment, containing most Admirable Remarks, relating to the Rules of true *Grammar*, and the soundest Maxims of *Rhetorick*. He adds, That the little which is left concerning *Tragedy* is Incomparable, and that one can hardly find among the *Ancients* any thing that is of a better taste.

But notwithstanding the general Vogue, that this Treatise of *Aristotle* has had in the World, yet that great *Critick Julius Scaliger*, in the Epistle to his Son *Sylvius*, before his *Poëtica*, has different Sentiments, for he calls it a Lame and Imperfect Work; and that if it were not for Respect to that *Philosopher*, he tells us, he could say a great deal more. But the Learned *Gerardus Johannes Vossius*, in the Preface to his *Institutiones Poëticæ*, falls upon *Scaliger* for this Opinion, saying, That he can by no means think this *Treatise* of *Aristotle* so despisable a Work; That, for his part, he did not know any thing Writ by the *Ancients* upon this Subject, that did come up to it; And that such *Modern Writers* as have Treated of the *Art* of *Poetry*, have still got *more* or *less* Reputation, in proportion to their *Observing* or *not* Observing that Excellent Model, given by *Aristotle*.

Decius Magnus Auſonius,

WAS Born at *Bourdeaux* in *France.* He was *Præceptor* to *Gratian* the Emperour, by whom he was made *Conſul*, in the Year 379. *Bellarmin*, *Gyraldus*, and ſome others, ſuppoſe him to have been a *Chriſtian*, but *Gerard Voſſius* poſitively affirms, that he was a *Heathen.*

He Writ ſeveral Things in *Verſe*, and ſome in *Proſe.*

Johannes Ludovicus Vives, in his Third Book *De Tradendis Diſciplinis*, tells us, That *Auſonius* is every where ſo full of Wit and Smartneſs, that he never ſuffers his *Reader* to fall aſleep.

Johannes Brodæus, *lib.* 1. *Miſcellan. cap.* vi. ſays, That *he* does not think *Auſonius*'s Stile ſo impolite, as thoſe do, who, by way of Reproach, call him *Ferreum Scriptorem*, a *Writer* as *hard* as *Iron.*

Eraſmus in Dialogo Ciceroniano, *pag.* 149. allows, That *Auſonius* had both *Wit* and *Learning*; but that his *Style* was every whit as looſe and effeminate, as his *Life*; and that he was ſo far from having the leaſt ſavour of *Cicero*'s Style, that one might as well call a *German* a *French*-Man, as call *Auſonius Ciceronian.*

Olaus Borrichius, in his *Diſſertat. Acad. de Poetis*, *pag.* 73. affirms, That all the Works of *Auſonius* were elaborate, choice, and ingenious; but *that* he could not always free himſelf from the Dregs of the Age he liv'd in.

Joſeph Scaliger, in his Notes upon *Virgil*, tells us, That *Auſonius* was the moſt Learned of all the *Poets*

from *Domitian* down to that time, and that it is very well worth any Man's while to read him.

Caspar Barthius, in his Third Book *Adversar. cap.* vii. says, That he will bear *Ausonius* Witness, that whatsoever is to be found in him, ought to be look'd upon as true and good *Latin*; for that he never set down any thing, but he had some example from the *Ancients* for his Authority.

He also tells us, That *Ausonius* was too Learned for the Age he liv'd in, and *that* the Authors which he took most delight in Reading, were lost.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poëtica*, *cap.* v. observes to us, That *Ausonius* was one of a great, and an acute Wit; but *that* his Stile is somewhat harsh; *That* he is not all of a Piece; *That* he has Writ on several Subjects, but not alwyas with the same success; and *that* therefore we are not to *Judge* of him, from what *he hath done*, but from what *he could have done*. He wishes, That *Ausonius* had never Writ any of his *Epigrams*; since, in his opinion, there is not one of them that is finish'd and polish'd as it ought to be; nay, *he says*, *some* are Impertinent, cold, and frivolous; for that, whenever he Translated from the *Greek*, he never minded to carry the *Original* Beauty into the *Latin*: *Others* are so filthy and abominable, that they rather deserve the *Flame*, than the *Sponge*.

He adds, that this Author was very careless and negligent, and therefore it is, that we find many of his *Iambicks*, which though at the beginning seem pure and elaborate, yet in the conclusion they prove feculent, and full of dregs.

As for his other *Poems*, says *Scaliger*, viz. his *Gryphus de Numero Ternario*, and his *Eclogues*, they are indeed very

very good, and muſt be allow'd to be writ by one who had a great skill in Poetry.

But the moſt celebrated Piece of *Auſonius*, in the Opinion of *Scaliger*, is his *Poem* upon the *Moſelle*; This, *ſaith he*, was ſo elaborate a Work, that had *Auſonius* writ nothing elſe, *this* would have been ſufficient to have got him the Character of a *Great Poet*; there being in it a great deal of Art, Method, Fine Language, Genius, Candor, and Sharpneſs. **Jul. Scalig.** *lib.* vi. *Poetices*, *cap.* v.

Lilius Gyraldus ſays, That tho' *Auſonius* was a *Chriſtian*, yet in his Writings he was often ſo Obſcene and Laſcivious, that he did not deſerve to be reckon'd among the *Chriſtians*.

He ſays, There's a great deal of Learning in the *Gryphus*, and alſo abundance of curious Variety; but *that* he does not find there is much either of *Judgment*, or of *Elegancy* in it.

Francis Beaumont and *John Fletcher.*

MR. *Beaumont's* Parentage, Birth, Country, Education, and Death, are wholly unknown to Me; And as to Mr. *Fletcher*, all I know of him is, That he was Son to the Eminent Dr. *Richard Fletcher*, who was created *Biſhop* of *Briſtol* by Queen *Elizabeth*, *Ann.* 1559. and by her preferr'd to *London*, 1593. He dyed in *London* of the *Plague*, *Anno.* 1625. being Nine and Forty Years of Age, and was buried in St. *Mary-Overies* Church in *Southwark*.

There

There are Two and Fifty Plays written by these worthy Authors; all which are now extant in one Volume. Printed in Fol. *Lond.* 1679.

Winstanley tells us, That *Beaumont* and *Fletcher* joyned together, made one of the happy *Triumvirate* (the other two being *Johnson* and *Shakespear*) of the chief *Dramatick* Poets of our Nation, in the last foregoing Age; among whom there might be said to be a *Symmetry* of *Perfection*, while each excell'd in his peculiar way: *Ben. Jonson* in his elaborate Pains and Knowledge of Authors; *Shakespear* in his pure Vein of Wit, and natural *Poetick* Height; *Fletcher* in a Courtly Elegance, and Genteel Familiarity of Style, and withal a Wit and Invention so over-flowing, that the Luxuriant Branches thereof were frequently thought convenient to be lopt off by *Beaumont*; which Two joyned together, like *Castor* and *Pollux* (most *happy* when in Conjunction) raised the *English* to equal the *Athenian* and *Roman* Theaters. **Winstanley**, of the most famous *English* Poets.

Dryden says, That *Beaumont* and *Fletcher* had, with the advantage of *Shakespear's* Wit, which was their *precedent*, great Natural Gifts, improv'd by Study. *Beaumont* especially being so accurate a Judge of *Plays*, that *Ben. Johnson*, while he liv'd, submitted all his Writings to his Censure, and, 'tis thought, us'd his judgment in Correcting, if not contriving all his Plots. What value *he* had for him, appears by the Verses he writ to him; and therefore (says *Dryden*) I need speak no farther of it. The first Play that brought *Fletcher* and *him* in esteem, was their *Philaster*; for before that, they had written two or three very unsuccessfully: As the like is reported of *Ben. Johnson*, before he writ *Every Man in his Humour*. Their *Plots* were generally more regular than

than *Shakespear's*, especially those which were made before *Beaumont's* death; and they understood and imitated the Conversation of *Gentlemen* much better; whose wild Debaucheries, and quickness of Wit in *Repartees*, no Poet before them could paint as *they* have done. *Humour*, which *Ben Johnson* deriv'd from particular Persons, *they* made it not their business to describe: *They* represented all the *Passions* very lively, but above all, *Love*. I am apt to believe, says *Dryden*, the English Language in *them* arriv'd to its highest perfection; what words have since been taken in, are rather superfluous than ornamental. *Their* Plays are now the most pleasant and frequent Entertainments of the Stage; *two* of *theirs* being acted through the Year for *one* of *Shakespear's* or *Johnson's*: The reason is, says *Dryden*, because there is a certain *gayetie* in *their* Comedies, and *Pathos* in their more serious Plays, which suits generally with all Mens Humours. *Shakespear's* Language is likewise a little obsolete, and *Ben. Johnson's* Wit comes short of *theirs*. **Dryd.** *Essay of Dramatick Poesie, pag.* 34.

'Tis one of the Excellencies of *Shakespear*, that the *Manners* of his *Persons* are generally apparent; and you see their bent and Inclinations. *Fletcher* comes far short of him in *this*, as indeed he does almost in every thing, says *Dryden*: There are but glimmerings of *Manners* in most of his *Comedies*, which run upon Adventures: And in his *Tragedies*, *Rollo*, *Otto*, the *King* and *No King*, *Melantius*, and many others of his best, are but Pictures shown you in the *twi light*; you know not whether they resemble Vice or Virtue, and they are either good, bad, or indifferent, as the present Scene requires it. But of all *Poets*, this Commendation is to be given to *Ben. Johnson*, that the *Manners* even of the most inconsiderable

ſiderable Perſons in his Plays are every where apparent. **Dryd.** *Pref.* to *Troilus* and *Creſſida.*

The Characters of *Fletcher* are poor and narrow, in Compariſon of *Shakeſpear*'s; I remember not one (ſays *Dryden*) which is not borrowed from him; unleſs you will except that ſtrange mixture of a Man in the *King* and *No King*: So that in this part *Shakeſpear* is generally worth our Imitation; and to imitate *Fletcher* is but to Copy after him who was a Copyer. **Dryd.** *ibid.*

The Excellency of *Shakeſpear* was in the more manly Paſſions; *Fletcher's* in the ſofter: *Shakeſpear* writ better betwixt Man and Man; *Fletcher*, betwixt Man and Woman: Conſequently, the One deſcrib'd *Friendſhip* better; the other *Love*: Yet *Shakeſpear* taught *Fletcher* to write *Love*; and *Juliet*, and *Deſdemona*, are Originals. 'Tis true, ſays *Dryden*, the *Scholar* had the *Softer* Soul; but the *Maſter* had the *Kinder*. Friendſhip is both a *Vertue*, and a *Paſſion* eſſentially; *Love* is a *Paſſion* only in its Nature, and is not a *Virtue* but by Accident: Good nature makes *Friendſhip*; but Effeminacy Love. *Shakeſpear* had an Univerſal Mind, which comprehended all Characters and Paſſions; *Fletcher* a more confin'd, and limited: For though he treated Love in perfection, yet Honour, Ambition, Revenge, and generally all the ſtronger Paſſions, he either touch'd not, or not Maſterly. To conclude all; He was a Limb of *Shakeſpear*. **Dryd.** *Pref.* to *Troilus* and *Creſſida.*

Fletcher, *to thee, we do not only owe*
All theſe good Plays, *but thoſe of others too;*
Thy Wit repeated, does ſupport the Stage,
Credits the laſt, *and entertains* this *Age;*
No Worthies form'd by any Muſe *but thine,*
Could purchaſe Robes, to make themſelves ſo fine.

What

What brave Commander is not proud to see
Thy brave Melantius *in his Gallantry?*
Our greateſt Ladies *love to ſee* their *Scorn*
Out-done by thine, *in what themſelves have worn;*
Th' impatient Widow *e're the Tear be done,*
Sees thy Aſpaſia *weeping in* her *Gown.*
I never yet the Tragick *ſtrain eſſay'd,*
Deterr'd by that inimitable Maid:
And when I venture at the Comick *ſtile,*
Thy Scornful Lady *ſeems to mock my toil.*
Thus has thy Muſe, *at once, improv'd and marr'd*
Our *ſport in* Plays, *by rendring it too hard;*
So when a ſort of luſty Shepherds throw
The Bar by Turns, and none the reſt out-goe
So far, but that the beſt are meaſuring caſts,
Their emulation, and their paſtime laſts;
But if ſome brawny Yeoman of the Guard
Step in, and toſs the Axle-tree a yard,
Or more, beyond the fartheſt Mark, the reſt
Deſpairing ſtand, their Sport is at the beſt.

Edm. Waller.

How *I do love thee* Beaumont, *and thy Muſe,*
That unto Me *do'ſt ſuch Religion uſe!*
How I do fear my ſelf, that am not worth
The leaſt indulgent Thought thy Pen drops forth!
At once thou mak'ſt *me happy, and* unmak'ſt;
And giving largely to Me, more thou tak'ſt.
What Fate *is mine, that ſo it ſelf bereaves?*
What Art *is thine, that ſo thy Friend deceives?*
When even there where moſt thou praiſeſt Me,
For Writing better, I muſt envy Thee.

Ben. Johnſon.

——————————*I need not raiſe*
Trophies to Thee from other Mens diſpraiſe;
Nor is thy Fame on leſſer Ruines built,
Nor needs thy juſter Title the foul guilt
Of Eaſtern Kings, *who to ſecure their Reign,*
Muſt have their Brothers, Sons, and Kindred ſlain.
Then was Wits *Empire at the Fatal height,*
When labouring and ſinking with its weight,
From thence a Thouſand leſſer Poets *ſprung,*
Like petty Princes *from the fall of* Rome.
When Johnſon, Shakeſpear, *and thy ſelf did ſit,*
And ſway'd in the Triumvirate *of Wit*——
Yet what from Johnſon's *Oil, and Sweat did flow,*
Or what more eaſie Nature *did beſtow*
On Shakeſpear's *gentle Muſe, in Thee full grown*
Their Graces both appear, yet ſo, that none
Can ſay here Nature *ends, and* Art *begins,*
But mixt like th' Elements, *and born like* Twins;
So interweav'd, ſo like, ſo much the ſame,
None, this *meer* Nature, that *meer* Art *can name:*
'Twas this the Ancients *meant;* Nature *and* Skill
Are the two tops of their Parnaſſus *Hill.*

J. Denham on **Fletcher**'s Works.

He *that hath ſuch Acuteneſs, and ſuch Wit,*
As would ask Ten good Heads to husband it;
He *that can Write ſo well, that no Man dare*
Refuſe it for the beſt, let him beware:
Beaumont *is dead! by whoſe ſole Death appears,*
Wit' a Diſeaſe conſumes Men in few Years.

Rich. Corbet, *D. D.* on Mr. *Francis Beaumont.*
(Then newly Dead.)

Ludovico

Ludovico Arioſto,

BOrn in *Ferrara*, One of the two moſt Celebrated *Heroick* Poets of *Italy*; and thereupon Competitor with *Torquato Taſſo* the other. He died the 13*th* of *July*, 1533. In the fifty ninth Year of his Age. He wrote ſome *Latin* Poems, which are inſerted in the firſt *Tome* of the *Deliciæ Italorum Poetarum.* They are there mixt, and confounded with the Works of ſeveral *other Poets* of no great Note: But his *Italian* Poems had a better fate, for they being more valu'd and eſteem'd, were Printed by themſelves. The chief of his *Italian* Poems are, 1. His *Satyrs*, which, at their firſt coming into the World, had a Vogue, but in this Age they are not much valu'd. 2. His *Comedies*, whereof the moſt famous are *Il Negromante*, *La Caſſaria*, *Gli Suppoſiti*, *La Lena*, and *La Scolaſtica.* But that which moſt contributed to *Arioſto*'s Fame, was his Heroick Poem of *Orlando Furioſo*, wherein he takes his Argument from the *Expedition* of the Emperour *Charles* the *Great* againſt the *Saracens* in *Spain*; This Poem coſt *Arioſto* twenty Years Labour; though, as the Story goes, *Cardinal d'Eſt*, to whom it was Dedicated, had ſo mean an Opinion of it, that he cry'd out to *Arioſto*, *Dove, Diavolo, Meſſer Ludovico, avete pigliate tante Coglionerie*, *Whence, the Devil, Maſter* Lewis, *haſt thou taken all theſe Fooleries?*

Paulus Jovius, in his *Elogies* of Learned Men, ſays, That of all the *Comedies* of *Arioſto*, the *Suppoſiti* ought to be preferr'd; ſcarce inferiour to thoſe of *Plautus*, for Invention, and its various Beauties and Graces.

Joh. Ant. Bumaldus, otherwiſe call'd *Ovidius Montalbanus*, in his *Bibliotheca Bononienſis*, tells us, That all the *Comedies* of *Arioſto* were writ with exquiſite Art; and that his *Epick* Poem of *Orlando Furioſo* was ſo Univerſally eſteem'd of, that it had been Tranſlated into moſt of the Languages of *Europe*.

Rapin, in the firſt part of his *Reflections* on *Ariſtotle*'s Book of *Poeſie*, *ſect.* 2. remarks, That *Arioſto* has too much Flame. And *Section* xi, he takes notice, into what Enormities *Petrarch* hath run in his *Africa*; *Arioſto* in his *Orlando Furioſo*; Cavalier *Marino* in his *Adonis*, and all the other *Italians* who were ignorant of *Ariſtotle*'s Rules; and follow'd no other Guides but their own *Genius* and *Capricious* Fancy: The truth is, ſays *Rapin*, the *Wits* of *Italy* were ſo prepoſſeſs'd in favour of the *Romantick Poetry* of *Pulci*, *Boyardo* and *Arioſto*, that they regarded no other Rules, than what the Heat of their *Genius* inſpir'd.

The *ſame Author* in the Second part of thoſe *Reflections*, *Sect.* 8. obſerves, That *Arioſto*'s *Epiſodes* are too Affected, never *probable*, never *prepar'd*, and often without any dependance on his Subject, as that of King *Agramante* and *Marfiſa*; but theſe things are not to be expected from a *Poem*, where the *Heroes* are *Paladins*: And where predominates an *Air* of *Chimerical* and *Romantick Knight-Errantry*, rather than any *Heroick* Spirit.

But, to conclude, *Rapin*, *Sect.* 16. tells us, That *Arioſto* had ſomewhat more of an Epick Poem than the reſt of the *Italians*, becauſe he had read *Homer* and *Virgil*; He is pure, Great, Sublime, admirable in the Expreſſion; His Deſcriptions are Maſter-pieces; but he has no judgment at all; his Wit (ſays *Rapin*) is like the fruitful Ground, that together produces *Flowers* and *Thiſtles*;

He

He ſpeaks well, but thinks ill, and tho' all the Pieces of his *Poem* are pretty, yet the whole Work together is nothing worth, for an *Epick* Poem: He had not then ſeen the Rules of *Ariſtotle*, as *Taſſo* did afterwards, who is better than *Arioſto*, ſays *Rapin*, whatever the *Academy* of *Florence* ſay to the Contrary.

Dryden, in his *Dedication* to the Earl of *Dorſet* before the *Tranſlation* of *Juvenal*, *pag.* 7. ſays, That *Arioſto*, an *Epick Poet*, neither Deſign'd Juſtly, nor Obſerv'd any Unity of Action, or Compaſs of Time, or Moderation in the Vaſtneſs of his Draught; His Style, ſays *Dryden*, is Luxurious, without Majeſty, or decency; And his Adventures, without the Compaſs of *Nature* and *Poſſibility*.

Sir *Will. Temple*, in his *Eſſay* of Poetry, *pag.* 46. Remarks, That, *Arioſto* and *Taſſo* enter'd boldly upon the Scene of *Heroick Poems*, but having not Wings for ſo High Flights, began to learn of the Old ones, fell upon their Imitations, and chiefly of *Virgil*, as far as the Force of their *Genius*, or Diſadvantage of New Languages and Cuſtoms would allow.

John Boccace,

A Moſt generally known and extolled *Florentine* Writer, and worthily Rank'd among the *Poets*, not only for his *Bucolicks*, but ſeveral other Writings of a *Poetical* Nature, as his *Genealogia di Dei*, his *Huomini Illuſtri*, his *Decameron*, his *Novels*, &c. beſides which he Wrote ſeveral other Things both *Hiſtorical* and *Geographical*.

He

He was Born at *Certaldum*, a Town belonging to the *Dutchey* of *Florence*, in the Year 1314. He dyed in the Year 1375. or, according to *Voſſius*, 1376.

Johannes Trithemius, in his *De Scriptoribus Eccleſiaſticis*, ſays, That *Boccace*, in Secular Learning, far Exceeded all of that Age, and *that* he was not altogether unskill'd in Matters of Divinity.

He further ſays, That he was both a *Poet*, a *Philoſopher*, and an Excellent *Aſtronomer*; and that he was a Man of a quick, ready Wit, and a good Orator.

Janus Jacobus Boiſſardus, in his *Icones Virorum Illuſtrium*, tells us, That *Boccace* has Written ſeveral Pieces; all which do ſufficiently ſhew both the great Learning, and the indefatigable pains of the Author.

Gerardus Johannes Voſſius, *lib.* iii. *De Hiſtoricis Latinis*, *cap.* 1. ſpeaking of *Boccace's Genealogia Deorum*, ſays, That very Book got him a great Reputation, both for Learning and Induſtry.

But the Learned *Konigius*, in his *Bibliotheca*, tells us, That ſome think, this was none of his own, and that *he* only tranſcrib'd it.

Iſaac Bullart, in his *Academie des Sciences*, ſays, That the moſt conſiderable of all *Boccace's* Works was his *Decameron*, which had been receiv'd with the Univerſal Applauſe of all *Italy*; and that it was ſo well approv'd of in Foreign Parts, that it was Tranſlated into almoſt all Languages; and *that* the more it was oppreſs'd, and cenſur'd, by reaſon of ſome ſevere Reflections upon the *Monks*, the more it was deſir'd, and ſought after.

Lilius

Lilius Gyraldus Remarks, That *Petrarch* and *Boccace* had a *Poetical Genius*, but *that* they did not ſhew either Judgment or Accuracy in their *Poems*, which unhappineſs he chiefly aſcrib'd to the Age they liv'd in.

Eraſmus in *Ciceroniano*, *pag.* 155. ſays, That *Blondus* and *Boccace* were inferiour to *Petrarch*, both as to the force and energy of Stile, and alſo the Purity and Propriety of the *Latin Tongue.*

Ludovicus Vives, *lib.* 3. *De Tradendis Diſciplinis*, tells us, That *Boccace* was *Petrarch*'s Scholar, and *that* he was in no reſpect to be compared with his *Maſter.*

But in another Place *he* Remarks, That *Boccace*'s *Genealogia Deorum*, was a Work much beyond the Age he liv'd in; though he own'd, he was ſometimes very Dull and Tedious in his *Mythological* Expoſitions.

Salvati, in his *Preface* to the *Italian Grammar* of the *Port-Royal*, *pag.* 6. obſerves, That *Boccace* was much the more Correct, and Natural in his *Proſe*, than in his *Verſe.*

And *Paulus Jovius* tells us, It was the common ſaying in his time, That as *Petrarch* had but ill luck in *Proſe*, ſo *Boccace* was Unfortunate in *Verſe.*

Rapin Obſerves to us, That *Boccace* Wrote with great Purity in his own Tongue; but *that* he was too trivial and familier, to deſerve the Name of an *Heroick Poet.* **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſtot. *Treat. of* Poeſie, *part* 2. *Sect.* 16.

He alſo in another place Remarks, That *Boccace*'s Wit is juſt, but not Copious. **Rap.** *Ibid. part* 1. *Sect.* 2.

And

And, to conclude, *He* accuses him of great Vanity, in making *himself* the constant Subject of his Discourse.

Boccace's Decads, or *Novels*, are Prohibited by the Church of *Rome*, being inserted in the *Index Expurgatorius*. Printed in *Octavo*, 1681. at *Rome.*

George Buchanan,

AN Excellent *Latin Poet*, Born in a Village, in the Province of *Lennox*, in *Scotland*, *Anno Dom.* 1506. about the beginning of *February*. He died at *Edinburgh*, in the Year 1582. the 28*th.* day of *December.*

Buchanan, a Man born, as he himself hath Written in a *Poem*, *Nec Cælo*, *nec Solo*, *nec Seculo erudito*, that is, neither in a *Climate*, nor *Country*, nor *Age* of any Learning; yet, says *Cambden*, happily arriving himself at the Top and Perfection of *Poetical* skill, so as *He* may deservedly be reckon'd *Prince* of the *Poets* of this *Age.* **Cambden's** *Annals*, 1582.

Thuanus, in his most incomparable *History*, tells us, That *Buchanan* had not his Fellow in the *Age* he Liv'd, either in respect of his natural Wit, or of the excellent Talent he had in Writing; which even his Works, which in spite of *envy* or *Malice* will survive as long as the World endures, do sufficiently demonstrate **Thuan.** *Ad Annum*, 1582.

Turnebus, in his *Adversar. lib.* 1. *cap.* 2. says, he believes, there is no Man in *France*, who has had any thing of Educatior

Education, or Breeding, but is acquainted with *George Buchanan*, who is not only an Excellent *Poet*, but one who is throughly skill'd in all sorts of Learning.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. positively affirms, That *Buchanan*, for *Latin* Verse, excels all the *Poets* in *Europe*.

Father *Vavasſor* the *Jesuit*, in his *Remarq. anonym. sur les Reflex. touchant la Poetique, pag.* 66. tells us, That of all the *Poets* who have writ in *Latin*, he knew no Man who was more a Master of his own *Idea's*, nor who could with more ease command his Style, and his Expressions, than *Buchanan*.

Dr. *Burnet*, in his *Hist.* of the *Reform.* takes notice, That among Those who were at this time (1541.) in hazard, *George Buchanan* was one. The *Clergy* were resolv'd to be reveng'd on him, for the sharpness of the *Poems* he had written against them: And the King had so absolutely left all Men to their Mercy, that *he* had died with the rest, if he had not made his escape out of Prison: Then he went beyond Sea, and liv'd twenty Years in that Exile, and was forc'd to teach a School most part of the time; yet the greatness of his Mind, says *Burnet*, was not oppress'd with that mean Employment. In his *Writings* there appears, not only all the Beauty and Graces of the *Latin Tongue*, but a Vigor of Mind and Quickness of Thought, far beyond *Bembo*, or the other *Italians*, who at that time affected to revive the purity of the *Roman* Style. It was but a feeble imitation of *Tully* in *them*; but *his* Style is so natural and nervous, and his Reflexions on Things are so solid, (besides his Immortal *Poems*, in which he shews how well he could imitate all the *Roman* Poets, in their several ways of Writing, that he who compares them, will be often tempted to prefer the *Copy* to the *Original*,) that

he is justly reckon'd the Greatest and Best of our Modern Authors. **Burnet's** *Hist.* of the *Reform.* Book 3*d*, *pag.* 311.

Borrichius tells us, That the *Poems* of *George Buchanan*, the *Scotchman*, have through their great variety of Matter, the beauty of their Style, the lustre of their Figures, and an unaffected observance of a *Decorum*, gain'd him the love and praise of almost all Learned Men. It was a high Character, that *Joseph Scaliger* gave of *Buchanan*, in that *Distich* of his:

Imperii fuerat Romani *Scotia finis*,
Romani *eloquii Scotia finis erit.*

With how much Devotion, but yet how neatly, does he play upon *David's* Harp? How florid are his Elegies? How full of gravity are those *Tragedies* of his, *Jephte*, and *Baptista*? How splendid are his five Books *De Sphæra Mundi*? How elegant is he in his *Lyricks*, *Miscellanies*, and *Epigrams*? And to conclude, How sharp and Satyrical are his *Franciscanus* & *Fratres*? **Borrich.** *Dissertat. Academ. de Poetis, pag.* 150.

Beza, in a Letter to *Buchanan*, says, It was incredible, the pleasure he took in reading his *Paraphrase* upon *David's Psalms.*

The Learned Dr. *Duport*, in the *Preface* to his *Metaphrasis Psalmorum*, tells us, That *Buchanan* transcended all that ever writ upon this Subject.

Monsieur Teissier, in his *Elogies* of the Learned Men which *Thuanus* mentions, says, That the *Paraphrase* of the *Psalms* was *Buchanan's* chief Master-piece; and that which added much to the credit of this Work, was, that he compos'd it at the very time his Mind was overwhelm'd

whelm'd with Grief, to wit, while he was a Priſoner in a Monaſtery in *Portugal.*

Grotius, in his *Epiſt.* V. *ad Gallos*, ſpeaking of the *Tragedies* of *Buchanan*, ſays, That he has not ſufficiently kept up the gravity of the *Buskin*; but, in other reſpects, *that* he is a very great Man.

Rapin remarks, That among the *Modern Poets* that have writ in *Latin* of late days, thoſe who could attain to the *Numbers* and *Cadence* of *Virgil*, in the turn of their Verſe, have had moſt Reputation; And becauſe that *Buchanan*, who otherwiſe had *Wit*, *Fancy*, and a *pure Style*, perceiv'd not this *Grace*, or neglected it, he has loſt much of his Value and Credit: Perhaps nothing was wanting to make him an Accompliſh'd *Poet*, but this perfection, which moſt certainly is not *Chimerical*: And whoever ſhall reflect a little on the power of the *Dorian*, *Lydian*, and *Phrygian* Airs, whereof *Ariſtotle* ſpeaks in his *Problems*, and *Athenæus* in his *Banquets*, he muſt acknowledge, what Vertue there is in *Number* and *Harmony.* **Rap.** *Reflex.* on *Ariſt.* Treatiſe of *Poeſie*, 1. *part*, *Sect.* 37.

The *ſame Author* tells us, That *Buchanan* has a Character compos'd of many Characters; his Wit is eaſie, delicate, natural, but not great or lofty. **Rap.** *ibid. part* 2d. *Sect.* xvi.

The *Jephthe*, and *Baptiſta* of *Buchanan*, contain little conſiderable, except the purity of Style, in which theſe Tragedies are written. *Ibid. Sect.* 23.

Buchanan, ſays *Rapin*, has *Odes* comparable to thoſe of Antiquity; but he hath great *Unevenneſſes* by the mixture of his *Character*, which is not *Uniform* enough. *Ibid. Sect.* xxx.

Buchanan is noted by the Church of *Rome*, as *Hæreticus primæ Claſſis*, a *Heretick* of the firſt Form.

Callimachus,

AN Excellent *Greek* Poet of *Cyrene*, in great favour and eſteem with *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, and of his Son *Euergetes*, in honour of whoſe Queen he wrote his Fiction, call'd *Coma Berenices*. He alſo wrote *Hymns*, *Elegies*, and *Epigrams*, whereof many of his *Hymns* and *Epigrams*, as alſo ſeveral Fragments of his other Works, are yet extant, and not many Years ſince publiſhed by the Learned *Mademoiſelle le Fevre*, with Notes and Remarks full of ſolid Learning.

This Poet was one of the moſt Learned Men in his Age, according to the Opinion of *Tanaquillus le Fevre*, and ſome other *Criticks*: And, it may be, we cannot eaſily find an Author, who has writ a greater Number of Poems; though they were generally but ſmall Pieces; for the averſion he had to long and tedious Works, made him often ſay, That *a great Book was a great Evil.* But herein he did by no means pleaſe the *Criticks* of that Age, who commonly thought (but with little reaſon,) That *Poets*, like the *Sea*, ſhould never be *dry*, and that *to Abound* was the beſt Quality of a *Writer*.

Mademoiſelle le Fevre, in the *Preface* to her Edition of *Callimachus*, ſays, That in all the Writings of the Ancient *Greeks*, there never was any thing more Elegant, nor more polite, than the Works of *Callimachus*.

And of the ſame Opinion was her Father, *Tanaquillus*, in his *Abregé des Vies des Poetes Grecs*, *pag.* 143, 144. who tells us, That the way that *Callimachus* took in Compoſing his Verſes, was both pure and Maſculine; that

that *Catullus* and *Propertius* did often imitate him, nay, and that ſometimes they ſtole from him.

In theſe laſt Ages, there have been ſome *Criticks*, who would by no means allow, that *Callimachus* ever had any great *Genius* for *Poetry*; and amongſt others, we find *Ger. Joh. Voſſius* of this mind, in his *De Arte Poeticâ*, *pag.* 27. and alſo *pag.* 67. It is very probable, they might ground this their Opinion upon that *Diſtich* of *Ovid*:

* Battiades *toto ſemper cantabitur Orbe*,
Quamvis ingenio *non valet*, Arte valet. * Callimachus.

So that upon the faith of *Ovid*, they have given it for granted, That this Poet does rather abound with *Art* and *Labour*, than with *Wit* or *Spirit*. But *Daniel Heinſius*, in his Preface before *Heſiod*, Printed 1603. explaining this place of *Ovid*, tells us, That when this Author ſeems to accuſe *Callimachus*, for not having had a *Genius*; his meaning is not, that he wanted Invention, Subtlety, Addreſs, or Wit; but only, that He is not Natural enough, that he is too elaborate, and has too much of affectation, as if he thought it more honour to be a good *Gramarian*, than to be a true Poet. And hence (without doubt) it was, That *Candidus Heſychius*, a late Author with that fictitious Name, in his Book Entituled *Godellus utrum Poeta*, *cap.* 2. *pag.* 75. ſaith, That *Callimachus*, finding that the *Wind* did not favour him, never durſt venture into the *open Sea*, but always kept near the *Shore*, that ſo he might the more eaſily get into *Harbour*; that is to ſay, He wanting a *Poetical Genius*, and that *Enthuſiaſm* which elevates *Poets*, he never car'd to undertake a Work of too great a length.

Not

Not only *Quintilian*, in his *Institut. Oratoriar. lib.* x. *cap.* 1. but also *Philippus Beroaldus*, in his Comment upon *Propertius*, as likewise *Ger. Joh. Vossius*, in his *Institut. Poetic. lib.* 3. *pag.* 51. do severally conclude, and agree, That *Callimachus* pass'd among the *Greeks* for their best, and chiefest Writer of *Elegies.*

Though *Callimachus* was generally esteem'd a very good *Grammarian*, yet *Joseph Scaliger*, in *Scaligerana* 2. *pag.* 187. says, That he affected the most obscure, Antique, and improper Words, in many of his *Poems.*

Joannes Jonsius, in his *De Scriptoribus Historiæ Philosophicæ, lib.* 11. *cap.* v. affirms, That *Callimachus* was a most Excellent *Critick*; and that we cannot sufficiently deplore the loss of those many Pieces he Wrote, in relation to that sort of Learning.

Caius Valerius Catullus,

A Writer of *Epigrams.* He was Born at *Verona* about the end of the Second Year of the 173. *Olympiad*, Eighty Six Years before *Christ.* He died in the Thirtieth Year of his Age, and in the Fourth Year of the 180. *Olympiad*, the very Year that *Cicero* return'd from his *Exile.*

Petrus Crinitus, in his *De Poëtis Latinis*, tells us, That *Catullus* had so great a reputation for Learning, that even by the general consent of the Learned, the *Epithet* of *Doctus* was affixed to his Name. *Ovid* thought, that, for Majesty and loftiness of Verse, *Catullus* was no way inferiour to *Virgil* himself. And 'tis certain, says *Crinitus*, that

that notwithſtanding both the *Plinys* have condemn'd *Catullus*'s Verſe, as harſh and unpleaſant, yet *he* has *generally* been accounted a moſt Elegant *Poet*, and has had ſeveral who have copy'd after him.

Petrus Victorius, *lib.* 22. *cap.* XV. *Variarum Lectionum*, ſays, That 'tis impoſſible any thing can be more Witty, more Learned, or more Pleaſant, than *Catullus*; not to meddle with the purity of his Stile, wherein he Tranſcends almoſt all others.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. remarks, that *Catullus* was too *Critical*, and too ſtrict an obſerver of the *Roman* Elegancies.

Turnebus, *lib.* 12. *Adverſar. cap.* 1. ſtiles *Catullus* The Sweeteſt, and moſt Polite, of all the *Poets*.

Paulus Manutius, in his Third Book, and Fourteenth Epiſt. to *Muretus*, gives *Catullus* the preference before *Tibullus*, or *Propertius*, in the Elegancy of Stile, and in curious, neat Sentences.

Ovid calls *Catullus*, a Learned, Eloquent, and Witty, but withall an Obſcene *Poet*.

Martial had ſo high an Opinion of *Catullus*, that we find he compares him even to *Virgil*:

Tantum magna ſuo debet Verona Catullo,
Quantum parva ſuo Mantua Virgilio.
Mart. *lib.* 14. *Epigr.* 195.

Borrichius, in his *Diſſert. Acad. De* Poëtis, *pag.* 49. ſays, That *Catullus* was much in *Cicero*'s favour, and that he was a very ſweet Poet; and if at any time he appears hard or rough, eſpecially in his *Epicks*, yet he has made ſufficiently amends by his wonderful pleaſant Wit, and by his pure Elegancy in the *Roman* Language.

He

He alſo *adds*, that 'tis pity his *Wit* was not better employ'd.

Caſpar Barthius, *lib.* 38. *cap.* 7. *Adverſar.* tells us, That *Catullus*'s Contemporaries, gave him the Title of *Learned*, for no other reaſon, but only becauſe, he was the firſt that knew how to Tranſlate into *Latin* Verſe, whatſoever was moſt Beautiful and Delicate in the *Greek Poets*; which, before him, was thought impoſſible to be done.

Julius Scaliger, in his *De Poëtica*, *p.* 865. ſays, That he ne're could find in any Author, nor for his heart can he imagine the reaſon, why the *Ancients* gave *Catullus* the Title of *Learned*; ſince *He* does not ſee there is any thing in his Books, but what is common and ordinary. *He ſays*, his Stile his generally very hard and unpoliſh'd; though indeed, ſometimes it flows like Water, and has no ſtrength; *that* he is often ſo very immodeſt, that it puts him out of Countenance; and, *that* ſometimes he is ſo very languid and faint, that he cannot but pity him; and, to Conclude, *that* he is often under ſuch difficulty, and conſtraint, that he is mightily troubled and concern'd for him.

Rapin remarks, That *Catullus* in his *Elegies* has too much *Softneſs*, and a *Negligence* too *affected*.

The *Beauty* of an *Epigram*, ſays *Rapin*, conſiſts either in the *delicate turn*, or in a *lucky word*. The *Greeks* have underſtood this ſort of *Poeſie* otherwiſe than the *Latins*. The *Greek Epigram* runs upon the *turn* of a Thought that is Natural, but fine and ſubtle. The *Latin Epigram*, by a falſe *taſte* that ſway'd in the beginning of the decay of the *Latin Tongue*, endeavours to ſurprize the Mind by ſome *nipping* Word, which is call'd a *Point*. *Catullus* Writ after the former manner, which is of a *finer* Character; for he endeavours to cloſe a natural Thought within a

delicate

delicate *turn* of Words, and within the ſimplicity of a very ſoft Expreſſion.

Martial was in ſome manner the Author of this other way, that is to ſay, to terminate an ordinary Thought by ſome *Word* that is *ſurprizing.* After all, Men of a good Taſte, ſays *Rapin*, preferr'd the way of *Catullus*, before that of *Martial*; there being more of *true delicacy* in *that*, than in *this.* And in theſe latter Ages, we have ſeen a Noble *Venetian*, named *Andreas Naugerius*, who had an exquiſite diſcernment, and who, by a natural *Antipathy* againſt all that which is called *Point*, which he judged to be of an ill reliſh, ſacrific'd every Year, in Ceremony, a Volume of *Martial's Epigrams*, to the *Manes* of *Catullus*, in Honour to his Charracter, which he judg'd was to be preferr'd to that of *Martial.* **Rapin's** *Reflections on* Ariſtotle's Treatiſe *of* Poeſie, *part* 2. *Sect.* 29, and 31.

Gerardus Johannes Voſſius obſerves, That the roughneſs, or unevenеſs in *Catullus's* Verſe, ſo much taken notice of by the beſt *Criticks*, proceeds chiefly from his too frequent uſe of the Figures, *Ecthlipſis*, and *Synalæpha. Lib.* 3. *Inſtitutionum Poeticarum, pag.* 56.

Geoffry Chaucer.

THree ſeveral Places contend for the Birth of this Famous *Poet. Firſt, Berkſhire*, from the words of *Leland*, that he was born in *Barocenſi Provinciâ*; and Mr. *Cambden* affirms, that *Dunington-Caſtle*, nigh unto

Newbury, was Anciently his Inheritance. *Secondly*, *Oxfordshire*, where, *John Pits* is positive, that his Father (who was a Knight) liv'd, and that he was born at *Woodstock*. *Thirdly*, The Author of his Life, Printed 1602. Supposes him to be born at *London*. But though the place of his Birth is not certainly known, yet this is agreed upon by all hands, that he was counted the chief of the *English Poets*, not only of his time, but continued to be so esteem'd till this Age; and as much as we despise his old fashion'd Phrase, and Obsolete Words, *He* was one of the first Refiners of the *English* Language.

Of how great esteem he was in the Age wherein he flourish'd, *viz.* the Reigns of *Henry* the IV. *Henry* the V. and part of *Henry* the VI. appears, besides his being Knighted, and made *Poet Lauriate* by the Honour he had to be ally'd by Marriage to the great Earl of *Lancaster*, *John* of *Gaunt*.

We have several of his Works yet extant, but his *Squires Tale*, and some other of his Pieces are not to be found.

John Pits, in his *De Illustribus Angliæ Scriptoribus*, says, That *Chaucer* so illustrated the *English* Poetry, that he may justly be esteem'd our *English Homer*.

He likewise tells us, that he was an Excellent *Rhetorician*, a skillful *Mathematician*, an acute *Philosopher*, and no contemptible *Divine*.

Winstanley, in the Lives of the *English Poets*, compares *Chaucer* for the sweetness of his *Poetry*, to *Stesichorus*; And (*saith he*) as *Cethegus* was call'd *Suadæ Medulla*, so may *Chaucer* be rightly call'd the Pith and Sinews of Eloquence, and the very life it self of all Mirth and pleasant Writing. Besides, one gift he had above other Authors, says *Winstanley*, and that is, by the Excellencies

of

of his Deſcriptions, to poſſeſs his Readers with a ſtronger Imagination of ſeeing that done before their Eyes which they Read, than any other that ever Writ in any Tongue.

But above all, *He tells* us, *Chaucer's Canterbury-Tales*, is moſt valu'd and eſteem'd of.

The Learned and Ingenious Mr. *Roger Aſcham* calls *Chaucer*, The *Engliſh Homer*; adding alſo, That he values his Authority equal to that of *Sophocles* or *Euripides* in *Greek*.

Sir *Philip Sidney*, in his *Defence of* Poeſie, gives him this Character; Chaucer *undoubtedly did excellently in his* Troilus *and* Creſcid, *of whom truly I know not whether to marvel more, either that* He *in that miſty time could ſee ſo clearly, or* We *in this clear Age walk ſo ſtumblingly after him.*

This agrees with the following Verſes, made by Sir *John Denham*:

Old Chaucer, *like the Morning Star,*
To us diſcovers Day from far;
His light thoſe Miſts and Clouds diſſolv'd,
Which our dark Nation long involv'd;
But he *deſcending to the Shades,*
Darkneſs again the Age invades.

J. Denham. *The* 3d. *Edit.* 1684. *pag.* 89.

Sir *Henry Savil*, in his *Preface* to *Bradwardin's* Book againſt *Pelagius*, ſays, that *Chaucer* was the chief of our *Engliſh* Poets, and that he had a ſharp Judgment, and a pleaſant Wit; and that he was alſo well skill'd both in Philoſophy and Divinity.

Sir *Richard Baker*, in the Reign of *Edward* the *Third*, ſtiles Sir *Geoffry Chaucer*, the *Homer* of our Nation; adding,

That *he* found as ſweet a Muſe in the Groves of *Woodſtock*, as the *Ancients* did upon the Banks of *Helicon*.

Cambden alſo, in his *Britannia*, tells us, That it is the only thing the Town of *Woodſtock* hath to brag of, That ſhe gave Birth to *Geoffrey Chaucer*, our *Engliſh Homer*; of whom, in his Opinion, may truly be ſaid, that which an *Italian Poet* once apply'd to *Homer*:

——— *Hic ille eſt, cujus de gurgite Sacro*
Combibit arcanos vatum omnis turba furores.

Dr. *Sprat*, in his *Hiſtory* of the *Royal Society*, *pag.* 42. ſays, That till the time of King *Henry* the *Eighth*, there was ſcarce any man regarded the *Engliſh Language*, but *Chaucer*; and that nothing was Written in it, which one would be willing to read twice, but ſome of *his* Poetry; But that then it began to raiſe it ſelf a little, and to ſound tolerably well.

Tho' *Verſtegan* commends *Chaucer*, as an excellent Poet for his time; yet he wholly differs from thoſe, who are of opinion, that *he* did ſo mightily refine the *Engliſh Language*. Indeed, he rather condemns *Chaucer* for adulterating the *Engliſh Tongue*, by the mixture of ſo many *French* and *Latin* Words.

This our *Poet*, lies buried in *Weſtminſter* Abby, with the following Inſcription:

Qui ſuit Anglorum *vates ter maximus olim,*
Galfridus Chaucer, *conditur hôc Tumulo.*
Annum ſi quæras Domini, ſi tempora Mortis,
Ecce notæ ſubſunt, quæ tibi cuncta notant;
25 Octobris 1400.
Ærumnarum requies Mors.

Nicolaus Brigham *hos fecit* Muſarum *nomine ſumptus.*

Claudius

Claudius Claudianus,

BOrn at *Alexandria* in *Egypt*; he flouriſh'd in the time of *Theodoſius* the Great, and his Children, *Chriſtian* Emperours, tho' he himſelf continued an Obſtinate *Heathen*; however, for his eminency in *Latin* Poetry (whereof his *Proſerpina's Rape*, and ſeveral other *Poems* yet extant, are a Teſtimony,) he had his *Statue* erected by *Arcadius* and *Honorius*. And in that Inſcription, which was ſet upon his *Statue*, he is called *Præglorioſiſſimus Poetarum*.

Petrus Crinitus, *lib.* v. *De Poetis Latinis*, *cap.* 85. ſays, That *Claudian* was of an Excellent *Genius*, very much adapted to *Poetry*; that he is very happy in his Flights, and takes ſuch a wonderful delight in the variety of *Figures* and *Sentences*, that he ſeems by *Nature* to have been deſign'd for a *Poet*.

Joannes Ludovicus Vives, in his Comment upon St. *Auſtin's* Fifth Book *De Civitate Dei*, *cap.* 25. tells us, That *Claudian* was born to *Poetry*; that he was both Elegant, and Witty, and of a true *Poetical Genius*, but inclining to Superſtition; and that, as for his Poem *De Chriſto*, he verily believes, he wrote it only to pleaſe *Honorius*, ſo great a *Sycophant* was *Claudian*.

Julius Cæſar Scaliger, *lib.* 6. *cap.* 5. *De re Poeticâ*, ſays, That *Claudian* was a very great Poet; and that though he did not treat of the nobleſt ſort of Subjects, yet what was wanting that way, he would be ſure to ſupply with his *Wit*. *He adds*, That he was a Poet of a right happy Vein, that he had a ſolid judgment, that his Style was pure, eaſie, and natural, and that he had

had a great deal of ſmartneſs, without the leaſt affectation.

Lilius Gregorius Gyraldus tells us, That he did not much diſlike *Claudian's* Verſes, tho' there were ſome who did, upon the account of their having no variety; but always falling into the ſame *Cadence*. But, ſays *Gyraldus*, if there be any that approve of his Verſes, let them do ſo, with all my heart; yet he is ſure, *Claudian* flags in the *Invention*; for tho' at his firſt ſetting out, he ſeems to be full of Fire, and very brisk, yet all of a ſudden he ſtops, like a Man out of breath, and his Concluſion is never anſwearable to his Beginning. However, as *Piſo* ſaid, *Claudian* is a quick, ready Poet, and there is in him a great deal of Muſick and Sweetneſs: But yet the truth of it is, he is not fit to be Copy'd after; Though, as *Gyraldus* obſerves, there are *Flowers* in him, which if a Wiſe Man have the gathering, would be of wonderful advantage.

George Buchanan, in his Dialogue, *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*, ſtiles *Claudian*, a Poet of an Excellent Wit, and of very great Learning.

Euſtatius Swartius, *lib.* 1. *Analectorum*, *cap.* xiii. ſays, That *Claudian* was a Poet worthy of the higheſt Commendation; and that tho' his Wit and Eloquence happened to be in a Vicious Age; yet, ſince *Auguſtus's* Reign, no Man went beyond him, either in purity of Style, or loftineſs of Expreſſion.

But *Honoratus Faber*, *lib.* 3. *Euphyandri*, *cap.* 2. tells us, Though his *Style* be natural, ſoft, and ſweet, yet that his *Latin* is not ſo very pure, as ſome would perſwade us.

Borrichius, in his *Diſſertat. Acad. De Poetis*, *pag.* 73. obſerves to us, That even at this day *Claudian's* Verſes are read with great Veneration, in reſpect of his profound

found Wit; *that* his *Style* is chaſt, grave, and ſublime; and yet, which is a thing to be admir'd, eaſie and natural, interwoven with *Moral* and *Political* Inſtructions; but, to ſpeak the truth, his *Style* is now and then a little too haughty, and he is too full of the *Sallies* of *Youth*, which yet in *Virgil* no Man ever had juſt reaſon to find fault with.

Rapin remarks, That *Claudian* hath Wit and Fancy; but no taſte for that delicacy of the *Numbers*, and that *turn* of the Verſe, which the Skilful admire in *Virgil*; that he falls perpetually into the ſame *Cadence*; and, for that cauſe, one can hardly read him without being wearied; And that he has no *Elevation* in any kind. **Rap.** *Reflex.* on *Ariſt.* Treatiſe of *Poeſie*, *part* 2d. *ſect.* XV.

The *ſame Author* tells us, That the Common Undertakers in *Panegyricks*, who have not force to *form* handſomely a Deſign, looſe the Reins to their Fancy; and after they have pil'd a heap of groſs and deform'd *Praiſes*, without Order or Connexion, one upon another, *This*, forſooth, muſt be call'd a *Panegyrick*. 'Tis thus, ſays *Rapin*, that *Claudian* has *Prais'd* the Emperour *Honorius*, and the Conſuls, *Probinus*, *Olyorius*, *Stilicon*, and the other Illuſtrious Perſons of his time. Throughout all his *Panegyricks* reigns an *Air* of *Youthfulneſs*, ſays *Rapin*, that has nothing of what is *Solid*, though there appears ſome *Wit*. **Rap.** *ibid ſect.* XIV.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana poſter. pag.* 51. calls *Claudian* a moſt Elegant Poet; *adding*, That he has a great many fine things in his *Panegyrick* upon the fourth *Conſulſhip* of *Honorius*.

Joannes Cuſpinianus, *in Commentario*, *ad annum Urbis* MCLII. ſays, That *Claudian* writ a moſt Elegant *Panegyrick* upon this fourth *Conſulſhip* of *Honorius*; which,

ſays

ſays he, if a Man reads carefully, it may ſave him the reading the ſeveral Hiſtories of thoſe times; for that one may *there* find all the remarkable Occurrences, that had then happen'd: To conclude, *he ſays*, That *Claudian* was a Man of *Univerſal* Learning.

Abraham Cowley,

WAs born in *Fleetſtreet*, near to the end of *Chancery-Lane*, in the Pariſh of St. *Dunſtan* in the Weſt, *London*, *Anno* 1618. His Father, who was a *Grocer*, dying before the Son was born, the Mother, by her Endeavours and Friends, got him into *Weſtminſter* School, as a King's Scholar; where, in the Year 1633, then going into the Sxteenth Year of his Age, he Compos'd a Book, called *Poetical Bloſſoms*; whereby the great pregnancy of his Parts was diſcover'd: Soon after having obtain'd the *Greek* and *Roman* Languages, he was remov'd to *Trinity-Colledge* in *Cambridge*, where moſt of his Works were writ, or at leaſt deſign'd.

Dr. *Sprat* ſays, That of the ſeveral Works publiſhed by Mr. *Cowley*, it is hard to give one general Character, becauſe of the difference of their Subjects; and the various forms and diſtant times of their Writing. Yet, *ſays he*, this is true of them all, That, in all the ſeveral ſhapes of his *Style*, there is ſtill very much of the likeneſs and impreſſion of the ſame Mind: The ſame unaffected Modeſty, and natural freedom, and eaſie vigour, and chearful paſſions, and innocent mirth, which appear'd in all his Manners. We have many things

that

that he writ in two very *unlike* Conditions, in the *Univerſity* and the *Court*. But in his *Poetry*, as well as his life, he mingled with Excellent Skill what was good in *both* States. In his *Life* he joyn'd the innocence and ſincerity of the *Scholar*, with the humanity and good behaviour of the *Courtier*. In his *Poems* he united the Solidity and Art of the *One*, with the Gentility and Gracefulneſs of the *Other*.

If any ſhall think, that he was not wonderfully curious in the choice and elegance of all his Words: I will affirm, ſays *Sprat*, with more truth on the other ſide, That he had no manner of affectation in them: He took them as he found them made to his hands; he neither went before, nor came after the uſe of the Age. *He* forſook the Converſation, but never the Language, of the *City* and *Court*. *He* underſtood exceeding well, all the variety and power of *Poetical Numbers*; and practis'd all ſorts with great happineſs. If his Verſes in ſome places ſeem not as ſoft and flowing as ſome would have them, it was his *choice* not his *fault*. He knew that in diverting Mens Minds, there ſhould be the ſame variety obſerv'd, as in the proſpects of their Eyes: Where a Rock, a Precipice, or a riſing Wave, is often more delightful than a ſmooth, even Ground, or a Calm Sea. Where the Matter required it, he was as *gentle* as any Man. But where higher Vertues were chiefly to be regarded, an *exact Numeroſity* was not then his main Care. This (ſays *Sprat*) may ſerve to anſwer thoſe who upbraid ſome of his Pieces with *roughneſs*, and with more *Contraction* than they are willing to allow. But theſe Admirers of *Gentleneſs* without *Sinews*, ſhould know that different Arguments muſt have different Colours of Speech: That there is a kind of variety of *Sexes* in *Poetry*, as well as in *Mankind*: That as

the peculiar Excellence of the *Feminine Kind*, is *ſmoothneſs* and *beauty*; So *Strength* is the chief Praiſe of the *Maſculine.*

He had a perfect Maſtery in both the Languages in which he writ: But each of them kept a juſt diſtance from the other; neither did his *Latin* make his *Engliſh* too old, nor his *Engliſh* make his *Latin* too Modern. *He* excell'd both in *Proſe* and *Verſe*; and *both* together have that perfection, which is commended by ſome of the *Ancients*, above all others, that they are very obvious to the Conception, but moſt difficult in the imitation.

His *Fancy* flow'd with great ſpeed, and therefore it was very fortunate to him, that his *Judgment* was equal to manage it. *He* never runs his Reader, nor his Argument, out of breath. *He* perfectly practiſes the hardeſt Secret of good Writing, to know when he has done enough. *He* always leaves off in ſuch a manner, that it appears it was in his power to have ſaid much more. In the particular Expreſſions there is ſtill much to be applauded, but more in the Diſpoſition, and order of the whole. From thence there ſprings a new Comelineſs, beſides the feature of each part. His Invention is powerful, and large as can be deſir'd. But it ſeems all to ariſe out of the Nature of the Subject, and to be juſt fitted for the thing of which he ſpeaks. If ever he goes far for it, he diſſembles his pains admirably well.

The *Variety* of *Arguments* that he has manag'd, is ſo large, that there is ſcarce any particular of all the *Paſſions* of Men, or *Works* of *Nature*, and *Providence*, which he has paſs'd by undeſcrib'd. Yet (ſays *Sprat*) he ſtill obſerves the Rules of Decency, with ſo much care, that whether he inflames his Reader with the ſofter Affections,

ons, or delights him with inoffenſive Raillery, or teaches the familiar Manners of Life, or adorns the Diſcoveries of Philoſophy, or inſpires him with the Heroick Characters of Charity and Religion; To *all theſe* Matters, that are ſo wide aſunder, ſays *Sprat*, he ſtill proportions a due Figure of Speech, and a proper Meaſure of Wit. This indeed is moſt remarkable, that a Man who was ſo conſtant and fix'd in the *Moral Ideas* of his Mind, ſhould yet be ſo changeable in his *Intellectual*, and in *both* to the higheſt degree of Excellence.

In his *Latin Poems*, ſays Dr. *Sprat*, he has expreſs'd to admiration, all the *Numbers* of Verſes, and *Figures* of *Poeſie*, that are ſcatter'd up and down among the *Ancients*. There is hardly to be found in them all, any good faſhion of Speech, or colour of Meaſure, but *he* has comprehended it, and given inſtances of it, according as his ſeveral Arguments requir'd either a *Majeſtick* Spirit, or a *Paſſionate*, or a *Pleaſant*. This is the more extraordinary, in that it was never yet perform'd by any *Single* Poet of the Ancient *Romans* themſelves. *They* had the Language natural to them, and ſo might eaſily have moulded it into what Form or Humour they pleas'd: Yet it was their conſtant Cuſtome, to confine all their Thoughts and practice to one or two ways of Writing, as deſpairing ever to compaſs all together. This is evident in thoſe that excell'd in *Odes* and *Songs*, in the *Comical*, *Tragical*, *Epical*, *Elegiacal*, or *Satyrical* way. And this perhaps occaſion'd the firſt diſtinction and Number of the *Muſes*. For they thought the Task too hard for any one of them, though they fancied them to be *Goddeſſes*. And therefore they divided it amongſt them all, and only recommended to each of them, the care of a diſtant Character of *Poetry* and *Muſick*.

Sprat's Account of the Life of Mr. *Abraham Cowley*.

The Character that Sir *John Denham* gave of *Abraham Cowley*, you may take in these his following Verses:

Old Mother Wit, and Nature gave
Shakespear *and* Fletcher *all they have;*
In Spencer, *and in* Johnson, *Art*
Of slower Nature got the Start;
But both in him *so equal are,*
None knows which bears the happi'st share;
To him *no Author was unknown,*
Yet what he wrote was all his own;
He *melted not the ancient Gold,*
Nor with Ben. Johnson *did make bold*
To plunder all the Roman *Stores*
Of Poets, and of Orators:
Horace *his Wit, and* Virgil's *State*
He *did not steal, but emulate;*
And when he would like them *appear,*
Their Garb, *but not their* Cloaths, *did wear.*

Denham's Poems, *pag.* 90, 91. of the 3*d* Edition.

Rimer tells us, That a more happy *Genius* for *Heroick Poesie* appears in *Cowley*, than either in *Spencer*, or *D'avenant*. He understood the *purity*, the *perspicuity*, the *majesty* of Stile, and the Vertue of *Numbers*. He could discern what was beautiful and pleasant in *Nature*, and could express his Thoughts without the least difficulty or constraint. *He* understood how to dispose of the Matters, and to manage his Digressions. In short, he understood *Homer* and *Virgil*, and as prudently made his advantage of them. Yet as it may be lamented, that he carried not on the Work so far as he design'd,

so

ſo it might be wiſh'd that he had liv'd to Reviſe what he did leave us: I think, ſays *Rimer*, the *Troubles* of *David* is neither Title nor Matter proper for an *Heroick* Poem; ſeeing it is rather the *Actions*, than his *Sufferings*, that make an *Heroe*: Nor can it be defended by *Homer's Odyſſeis*, ſince *Ulyſſes's* Sufferings conclude with one *great* and *perfect* Action.

But notwithſtanding this *Cenſure* of Mr. *Rimer*, he afterwards tells us, That in *Cowley's Davideis* (Fragment and imperfect as it is) there ſhines ſomething of a more fine, more free, more new, and more noble *Air*, than appears in the *Hieruſalem* of *Taſſo*, which, for all his Care, is ſcarce perfectly purg'd from *Pedantry*.

And after all, ſays *Rimer*, in the *Lyrick* way *Cowley* far exceeds *Taſſo*, and all the reſt of the *Italians*. See **Rimer's** *Pref.* to his *Tranſlat.* of *Rapin*.

Samuel Woodford, in the *Preface* to his *Paraphraſe* upon the *Pſalms*, remarks, That in *Cowley's Davideis* there is to be found, as much as could be expected for the firſt ſitting, whatever is requiſite to make an *Heroick* Poem beautiful: Sound Judgment, happy Invention, graceful Diſpoſition, unaffected Facility, ſtrict Obſervance of Decencies, and all ſet off with that Majeſty and Sweetneſs of Verſe, that it is to be lamented he had not an Opportunity before his Death, to finiſh it according to his own Model, and the Proviſion he had laid up to that purpoſe. And truly (ſays *Woodford*) all his Divine Poems, have I know not what greatneſs of Spirit, which you ſhall ſeldom meet with elſewhere, and in *which* generally he has as much out-done himſelf, as in the *reſt* equal'd the moſt happy of our *Modern Poets*.

The occaſion of Mr. *Cowley's* falling on the *Pindarique* way of Writing, was (as Dr. *Sprat* informs us,) his accidental

accidental meeting with *Pindar*'s Works, in a place where he had no other Books to direct him: Having then conſider'd at leiſure the height of his Invention, and the Majeſty of his *Style*, he try'd immediately to imitate it in *Engliſh*. And he perform'd it, ſays *Sprat*, without the danger that *Horace* preſag'd to the Man who ſhould dare to attempt it.

How well *Cowley* ſucceeded in imitating the great *Pindar*, according to the opinion of Mr. *Flatman*, appears by his *Pindarique Ode* on *Samuel Woodford*'s *Verſion* of the *Pſalms*:

Bold man, that dares attempt Pindariqu' *now,*
Since the great Pindar's *greateſt Son*
From the ungrateful Age is gon;
Cowley *has bid th' ungrateful Age* Adieu!
Apollo's *rare* Columbus, *He*
Found out new Worlds *of* Poetry;
He, like an Eagle, *ſoar'd aloft,*
To ſeize his noble prey;
Yet as a Dove's, his *Soul was ſoft,*
Quiet as Night, but bright as Day:
To Heaven in a fiery Chariot He
Aſcended by Seraphick Poetry;
Yet which of us dull Mortals ſince can find
Any Inſpiring Mantle, *that* He *left behind*?

Thomas Flatman.

Dryden tells us, That Mr. *Cowley*, indeed, has brought *Pindarique* Verſe as near Perfection as was poſſible, in ſo ſhort a time. But (*ſays he*) if I may be allow'd to ſpeak my mind modeſtly, and without injury to his Sacred Aſhes, ſomewhat of the purity of *Engliſh*, ſomewhat of more equal Thoughts, ſomewhat of ſweetneſs in the *Numbers*,

Numbers, in one word, somewhat of a finer *turn* and more *Lyrical* Verse is yet wanting. As for the Soul of it, which consists in the Warmth and Vigour of Fancy, the Masterly Figures, and the Copiousness of Imagination, *he* has excell'd all others in this kind. Yet, if the Kind it self be capable of more Perfection, tho' rather in the *Ornamental* parts of it, than the *Essential*, what Rules of Morality or Respect (*says Dryden*) have I broken, in naming the Defects, that they may hereafter be amended? *Imitation* is a nice Point, and there are few *Poets* who deserve to be *Models* in all they Write. **Dryd.** *Pref. to the* 2d. *Part of* Poetical Miscellanies.

The Earl of *Mulgrave*, speaking of the Nature of *Pindarique Odes*, tells us:

The Poet here *must be indeed Inspir'd*
With Fury *too, as well as* Fancy *fir'd.*
Cowley *might boast to have perform'd this part,*
Had he with Nature *joyn'd the Rules of* Art;
But ill Expression *gives sometimes* Allay
To that rich Fancy, *which can ne're* decay.
Mulg. Essay on *Poetry.*

This Great Man, *Abraham Cowley*, lies buried in *Westminster* Abby, near two of our most Eminent *English Poets*, *Chaucer* and *Spencer*, with this Inscription:

ABRAHAMUS COWLEIUS,
Anglorum Pindarus, Flaccus, Maro,
Deliciæ, Decus, Desiderium Ævi sui,
Hîc juxtâ situs est.
Aurea dum volitant late tua Scripta per Orbem
Et Famâ æternùm vivis Divine Poeta,

Hîc

Hîc placidâ jaceas requie, cuſtodiat Urnam
Cana fides vigilentq; perenni Lampade Muſæ;
Sit ſacer iſte Locus, nec quis temerarius auſit
Sacrilegâ turbare manu Venerable Buſtum.
Intacti maneant, maneant per ſecula Dulcis
Couleii *Cineres, ſerventq; immobile Saxum.*
Sic vovet,
Votumque ſuum apud Poſteros ſacratum eſſe voluit,
Qui viro Incomparabili poſuit Sepulchrale marmor:
GEORGIUS DUX BUCKINGHAMIÆ.

Exceſſit è Vitâ Anno Ætatis 49. *& honorificâ pompâ elatus ex Ædibus* Buckinghamianis, *viris Illuſtribus omnium Ordinum exſequias celebrantibus, Sepultus eſt Die* 3°. *Menſis* Auguſti, *Anno Dom.* 1667.

Dantes Aligerus.

A Moſt Renowned *Florentine*, and the firſt of *Italian Poets* of any Fame or Note. *He* was born in the Year 1265. *He* dyed at *Ravanna* in the Year 1321. That which moſt proclaims his Fame to the World, is his Triple Poem, Entituled, *Paradiſe*, *Purgatory*, and *Hell*; beſides which he has Wrote ſeveral Things in Proſe. In his *Opuſculum de Monarchia* he held, That the *Civil Government* had no dependance upon the *Church*; for which reaſon, after his Death, he was Condemn'd as an *Heretick*, and the ſaid Book was Prohibited by the Church of *Rome*.

Gisbertus

Gisbertus Voetius, in the Second Book, the Firſt Section, and the Ninth Chapter of his *Bibliotheca*, ſays, That thoſe *Italian* Poems of *Petrarchá* and *Aligerus*, which do now and then touch upon *Eccleſiaſtical* Matters, are preferr'd by *Divines* before any of the Works of the other *Poets*.

Olearius, in his *Abacus Patrologicus*, calls *Aligerus*, a Man of very great Credit and Authority, who by his Learning had got the Love and Eſteem of all men; and that he was ſo great an *Aſſerter* of *Truth*, that he often laid open the *frauds* of the Church of *Rome*.

Johannes Villani, both his Countrey-Man and Contemporary, in the Ninth Book of his *Florentine Hiſtory*, affirms, That *Aligerus* exceeded all that went before him, either in *Verſe* or in *Proſe*, both for Nobleneſs of Fancy, and a Majeſtick Style.

Boccace, in his *De Caſibus virorum Illuſtrium*, calls *Dantes Aligerus*, an excellent Poet.

Cælius Rhodiginus, *lib.* 15. *cap.* 20. *Lectionum Antiquarum*, ſtiles him a Poet not contemptible.

Platina, in the Life of *Boniface* VIII. ſays, That *Dantes Aldegerius* was a Man of very great Learning, and an excellent *Italian* Poet.

Lilius Gyraldus, remarks, That in *Aligerus*, one might find both Learning and great Knowledge, and that he was particularly skill'd in the *Pariſian Divinity*; but that he is ſometimes too ſharp and biting. *He* farther *tells* us, That many think him too negligent in point of Order and Method, and alſo as to his Style; but that one *Joannes Stephanus*, a *Hermite*, a Perſon of great Learning, and one who from his Childhood had a mighty affection for *Aligerus*, was wont to refute thoſe perſons, by giving a full Anſwer to their Objections.

Rapin tells us, That *Dantes Aligerus* wants fire, and that he has not heat enough. **Rap.** *Reflex.* on *Arist.* Treatise of *Poesie*, *part* 1. *sect.* 2.

He also observes to us, That his Thoughts are so *Profound*, that much Art is requir'd to dive into them. *Ibid. sect.* xxvii.

And, to conclude, *he says*, That his Triple Poem of *Paradise*, *Purgatory*, and *Hell*, (which the *Italians* of those days, call'd a *Comedy*, but passes for an *Epick* Poem in the Opinion of *Castelvetro*) is of a sad and woful contrivance; and that speaking generally, *Dante* has a strain too Profound, to deserve the name of an *Heroick Poet.* **Rap.** *Ibid. part* 2. *sect.* xvi.

Sir *William D'avenant,*

WAS born in the City of *Oxford*, in the Parish of St. *Martins*, commonly call'd *Carfax*, near the end of *February* in the Year 1605. *He* was Poet *Laureat* to King *Charles* the first, and King *Charles* the Second. *He* dyed on the Seventh day of *April*, 1668. Aged 63. and was buried amongst the *Poets* in *Westminster* Abby, near to his old Antagonist, and Rival for the Bays, Mr. *Thomas May*: 'Twas observ'd, that at his Funeral his Coffin wanted the Ornament of his *Laureats-Crown*, which by the Law of *Heraldry* justly appertain'd to him: But this omission (says *Gerard Langbaine*) is sufficiently recompenc'd by an Eternal Fame, which will always accompany his Memory; *He* having been the first Introducer of all that is Splendid in our *English Opera's*, and

and 'tis by his means and induſtry, that our Stage at preſent Rivals the *Italian* Theatre.

His Works were all Printed together in a Large Folio, *London* 1673. and Dedicated by his Widow to his Royal Highneſs, the late King *James.*

Dryden, in his Preface to the *Tempeſt*, ſays, That in the Time he Writ with Sir *William D'avenant*, he had the opportunity to obſerve ſomewhat more nearly of him, than he had formerly done, when he had only a bare acquaintance with him; *That* he found him then of ſo quick a Fancy, that nothing was propos'd to him, on which he could not ſuddenly produce a Thought extreamly pleaſant and ſurprizing; and that thoſe firſt Thoughts of his, contrary to the old *Latin* Proverb, *were not always the leaſt happy*; and *that* as his Fancy was quick, ſo likewiſe were the Products of it remote and new; *that* he borrow'd not of any other; and *that* his Imitations were ſuch, as could not eaſily enter into any other Man; *that* his Corrections were ſober and judicious; and *that* he Corrected his own Writings much more ſeverely, than thoſe of another Man, beſtowing twice the Labour and time in Poliſhing, which he us'd in Invention.

Antonius à Wood, in his *Athenæ Oxonienſes*, *page* 292. calls *D'avenant*, *The ſweet Swan of* Iſis. *He ſays*, That though he wanted much of Univerſity Learning (his *Genius* being always oppoſite to *Logick*,) yet he made as high and noble Flights in the *Poetical* Faculty, as *Fancy* could advance, without it.

Winſtanley, in his Lives of the *Engliſh Poets*, tells us, That Sir *William D'avenant* may be accounted one of the Chiefeſt of *Apollo*'s Sons, for the great fluency of his Wit and Fancy; eſpecially his *Gondibert*, the Crown of all his other Writings.

Mr. *Hobbs*, in his Preface to *D'avenant's Gondibert*, is of the Opinion, That it is the beſt of *Heroick* Poems, either *Ancient* or *Modern.*

How high an Opinion alſo Mr. *Cowley* had of *this Work*, appears by theſe following Lines of *his:*

Methinks Heroick Poeſie *till now*
Like ſome Fantaſtick Fairy-Land *did ſhow,*
Gods, Devils, Nymphs, Witches, *and* Gyants Race,
And all but Man, *in* Man's chief Work *and* Place.
Thou like ſome worthy Knight *with Sacred Arms*
Doſt drive the Monſters *thence, and end the* Charms.
Inſtead of thoſe *doſt* Men *and* Manners *plant,*
The things which that Rich Soil *did chiefly Want.*
Yet ev'en thy Mortals *do* their Gods *excel,*
Taught by thy *Muſe to* Fight *and* Love *ſo well.*
By fatal Hands whilſt preſent Empires *fall,*
Thine from the Grave paſt Monarchies *recall.*
So much more thanks from Humane Kind does merit
The Poet's Fury, *than the* Zealot's Spirit.
And from the Grave *thou mak'ſt this* Empire *riſe,*
Not like ſome dreadful Ghoſt *t'affright our Eyes,*
But with more Luſtre and Triumphant State,
Than when it Crown'd at proud Verona *ſate.*

Abr. Cowley, upon *D'avenant's Gondibert.*

Dryden ſays, That, as for *Heroick Plays*, the firſt light we had of them on the *Engliſh Theatre*, was from the late Sir *William D'avenant:* It being forbidden him in the Rebellious times to Act *Tragedies* and *Comedies*, becauſe they contain'd ſome matter of Scandal to thoſe good People, who could more eaſily Diſpoſſeſs their *Lawful Soveraign*, than endure a *Wanton Jeſt*; he was forc'd to turn his Thoughts another way; and to introduce the Examples

of

of *Moral Vertue*, writ in Verſe, and perform'd in *Recitative Muſick.*

The Original of this *Muſick*, and of the *Scenes* which adorn'd his Work, he had from the *Italian Opera's*: But he heighten'd his Characters (as I may probably imagine, ſays *Dryden*) from the Example of *Corneille*, and ſome *French Poets.* In this Condition did this part of *Poetry* remain at his *Majeſties* Return. When growing bolder, as being now own'd by a Publick Authority, *D'avenant* review'd his *Siege of Rhodes*, and caus'd it to be Acted as a juſt *Drama.* But as few Men have the happineſs to *begin* and *finiſh* any new Project, ſo neither did *he* live to make his Deſign perfect: There wanted the fullneſs of a *Plot*, and the variety of *Characters* to form it as it ought: And perhaps, ſays *Dryden*, ſomewhat might have been added to the beauty of the Stile. All which he would have perform'd with more exactneſs, had he pleas'd to have given us another Work of the ſame Nature. For my ſelf (ſays *Dryden*) and others who come after him, we are bound, with all Veneration to his Memory, to acknowledge what advantage we receiv'd from that excellent Ground-Work which *he* laid: And ſince it is an eaſie thing to add to what already is invented, we ought all of us, ſays *Dryden*, without envy to him, or partiality to our ſelves, to yield him the precedence in it. **Dryd.** Eſſay of *Heroick Plays.*

Rimer, in the Preface to his Tranſlation of *Rapin's* Reflexions, *&c.* tells us, That *D'avenant's* Wit is well known; and that in the *Preface* to his *Gondibert*, appear ſome Strokes of an Extraordinary Judgment: *That* he is for *Unbeaten Tracks*, and *New Ways of Thinking*; but *that* certainly in his *untry'd Seas* he is no great *Diſcoverer.*

One

One design of the *Epick Poets* before *him*, was to adorn their own Country, *there* finding their *Heroes* and patterns of *Vertue*; whose Example (as they thought) would have greatest influence and power over Posterity; but *this Poet*, says *Rimer*, steers a different Course, his *Heroes* are all Forreigners: *He* cultivates a Country, that is nothing akin to him, 'tis *Lombardy* that reaps the honour of all.

Other Poets chose some *Action* or *Heroe* so illustrious, that the Name of the *Poem* prepar'd the Reader, and made way for its reception: But in *this Poem*, says *Rimer*, none can divine, what *Great Action* he intended to celebrate; nor is the Reader oblig'd to know whether the *Heroe* be *Turk* or *Christian*. Nor do the first Lines give any light or Prospect into his *Design*. Methinks, says *Rimer*, though his Religion could not dispence with an *Invocation*, he needed not have scrupl'd at the *Proposition*: Yet he rather chuses to enter in at the top of an House, because the Mortals of *Mean* and *Satisfied Minds* go in at the Door. And I believe, says *Rimer*, the Reader is not well pleas'd to find his Poem begin with the praises of *Aribert*, when the Title had promis'd a *Gondibert*. But before he falls on any other business, he presents the Reader with a Description of each particular *Heroe*, not trusting their *Actions* to speak for them; as former *Poets* had done. *Their* practice was fine and artificial, *his* (he tells us) is a *New way*. Many of his *Characters* have but little of the *Heroick* in them; *Dalga* is a Jilt, proper only for *Comedy*; *Birtha* for a *Pastoral*; and *Astragon*, in the manner here describ'd, yields no very great Ornament to an *Heroick Poem*; nor are his *Battles* less liable to Censure, than those of *Homer*.

He

He dares not, as other *Heroick Poets*, heighten the Action, by making *Heaven* and *Hell* intereſs'd, for fear of offending againſt *Probability*, and yet he tells of

——*Threads by patient* Parcæ *ſlowly ſpun.*

And for being dead, his Phraſe is,

" *Heaven call'd him, where peacefully he rules a Star.*

And the *Emerald* he gives to *Birtha*, has a ſtronger *tang* of the Old Woman, and is a greater *improbability*, than all the Enchantments in *Taſſo*. A juſt *Medium* (ſays *Rimer*) reconciles the fartheſt Extreams, and one preparation may give credit to the moſt unlikely Fiction. In *Marino*, *Adonis* is preſented with a *Diamond Ring*, where, indeed, the Stone is much-what of the ſame Nature; but this Preſent is made by *Venus*: And from a *Goddeſs* could not be expected a Gift of Ordinary Virtue.

Although a Poet is oblig'd to know all Arts and Sciences, yet he ought diſcreetly to mannage this Knowledge. He muſt have Judgment to ſelect what is noble or beautiful, and proper for his occaſion. He muſt by a particular *Chymiſtry* extract the Eſſence of Things, without ſoiling his Wit with the groſs and trumpery. But ſome Poets labour to appear skilful with that wretched affectation, they dote on the very terms and *jargon*: Expoſing themſelves rather to be laught at by the *Apprentices*, than to be admir'd by *Philoſophers*: But whether *D'avenant* be one of *thoſe*, I leave others to examine.

The

The ſort of *Verſe* he makes choice of, in his *Gondibert*, might, as *Rimer* ſuppoſes, contribute much to the Vitiating of his *Stile*; for thereby he obliges himſelf to ſtretch every Period to the end of four Lines: Thus the Senſe is broken perpetually with *Parentheſes*, the Words jumbl'd in confuſion, and a darkneſs ſpread over all; ſo that the Senſe is either not diſcern'd, or found not ſufficient for one juſt *Verſe*, which is ſprinkl'd on the whole *Tetraſtick*.

In the *Italian* and *Spaniſh*, where all the *Rhymes* are *diſſyllable*, and the percuſſion ſtronger, *this* kind of *Verſe* may be neceſſary; and yet to temper that grave March, they repeat the ſame *Ryhme* over again, and then they cloſe the *Stanza* with a *Couplet*, further to ſweeten the Severity. But in *French* and *Engliſh*, where we Rhime generally with only one Syllable, the *Stanza* is not allow'd, much leſs the *alternate Rhyme* in long Verſe; for the ſound of the Monoſyllable Rhyme is either loſt e're we come to its Correſpondent, or we are in pain by the ſo long expectation and ſuſpence. This *alternate Rhyme*, and the downright *Morality* throughout whole *Canto*'s together, ſays *Rimer*, ſhew *D'avenant* better acquainted with the *Quatrains* of *Pybrach*, which he ſpeaks of, than with any true Models of *Epick Poeſie*.

After all, ſays *Rimer*, *D'avenant* is ſaid to have a particular Talent for the *Manners*; his Thoughts are great, and there appears ſomething *roughly Noble* throughout this Fragment; which, had he been pleas'd to finiſh it, would, doubtleſs, not have been left ſo open to the Attack of *Criticks*. **Rimer**'s *Pref.* to his *Tranſlat.* of *Rapin*'s *Reflex.* on *Ariſtotle*'s Treatiſe of *Poeſie*.

To

To conclude, as Sir *William D'avenant* was a *Wit* himſelf, and would often play upon others; ſo he ſometimes had it return'd upon him, as appears by theſe following Verſes of Sir *John Suckling*:

Will. D'avenant *aſham'd of a fooliſh Miſchance,*
That he had got lately Travelling into France,
Modeſtly hoped the Handſomneſs of's Muſe,
Might any of Dormity about him excuſe.
And
Surely the Company would have been content,
If they could have found any Preſident;
But in all their Records, either in Verſe *or* Proſe,
There was not one Laureat *without a* Noſe.

Sir *John Denham.*

HE was the only Son of Sir *John Denham* of *Little Horſely* in *Eſſex*, but born at *Dublin* in *Ireland*. His Father being at the time of his Birth a Judge of that Kingdom, and Lord *Chief Baron* of the *Exchequer*. But before the foggy Air of that Climate could influence, or any way vitiate his Mind, he was brought from thence, his Father being preferr'd to be one of the *Barons* of the *Exchequer* in *England*. At Sixteen Years of Age, *Anno* 1631. he was taken from School, and ſent to the Univerſity of *Oxford*, where he became a Member of *Trinity* Colledge. In this Society he ſpent ſome Years; but afterwards returning to *London*, he

follow'd the Study of the *Civil Law.* But the Civil War breaking out, *he* zealouſly eſpouſing the Intereſt of the *Royal Party*, was forc'd to go beyond Sea; and at his Majeſties departure from St. *Germains* to *Jerſey*, he was pleas'd, without any ſollicitation, to confer upon Sir *John*, the Office of *Surveyor General* of all his Majeſties *Royal Buildings*; and at his *Coronation* created him *Knight* of the *Bath.*

He dyed on the Tenth of *March*, 1668. at his Houſe near *White Hall*, and was buried the 23*d* following at *Weſtminſter*, amongſt thoſe famous Poets, *Chaucer*, *Spencer*, and *Cowley.*

Winſtanley, in the Lives of the *Engliſh Poets*, ſays, That Sir *John Denham* was a Gentleman, who, to his other Honours, had this added, That he was one of the chief of the *Delphick Quire*, and for his Writings worthy to be Crown'd with a Wreath of *Stars.* The Excellency of his Poetry may be ſeen in his *Coopers Hill*, which (ſays *Winſtanley*) whoſoever ſhall deny, can be accounted no Friends to the *Muſes*: His Tragedy of the *Sophy*, is equal to any of the Chiefeſt Authors, which, with his other Works bound together in one Volume, will make his Name famous to all Poſterity.

Dryden, in his *Epiſt. Dedic.* to *Rival Ladies*, tells us, That Sir *John Denham's Coopers Hill*, is a Poem, which for the Majeſty of the Style, is, and ever wll be, the exact Standard of good Writing.

Gerard Langbaine, in his Account of the *Engliſh Dramatick Poets*, calls Sir *John Denham*, a Poet of the Firſt Form, whoſe Virtue and Memory will ever be as dear to all Lovers of Poetry, as his Perſon was to Majeſty it ſelf; *viz.* King *Charles* the Firſt and Second.

His

His Verſes on Sir *Richard Fanſhaw's* Tranſlation of *Il Paſtor Fido*, and his Preface to the *Deſtruction of Troy*, ſhew ſufficiently his Judgment, and his *Tranſlations* themſelves his Genius, for Performances of that Nature: And admitting it true, that few *Verſions* deſerve Praiſe; yet, ſays *Langbaine*, *His* are to be excepted from the General Rule. His *Elegy* on Mr. *Cowley*, will make his Name famous to Poſterity: And there wants nothing to eterniſe his Name, but a Pen equal to *his*, (if any ſuch were to be found) to perform the like friendly Office to his *Manes*.

Antonius à Wood, in his *Athenæ Oxonienſes*, *pag.* 302. informs us, That in the latter end of the Year 1641. Sir *John Denham* publiſh'd the Tragedy call'd the *Sophy*, which took extreamly much, and was admir'd by all Ingenious Men, particularly by *Edm. Waller* of *Beaconsfield*, who then ſaid of the Author, That *he broke out like the* Iriſh *Rebellion, Threeſcore Thouſand ſtrong, when no body was aware, or in the leaſt ſuſpected it.*

John Donne,

WAS born in *London*, in the Year 1573. About the Seventeenth Year of his Age he was admitted into *Lincolne's-Inn*, whither he betook himſelf from the Univerſity of *Oxford*; but inſtead of poring upon tedious Reports, Judgments, and Statute-Books, he accompliſh'd himſelf with the Politer kind of Learning, moderately enjoy'd the Pleaſures of the Town,

and frequented good Company, to which the ſharpneſs of his Wit, and gaiety of Fancy, rendred him not a little grateful; in which ſtate of Life, he compos'd his more brisk and youthful Poems, which are rather commended for the Height of Fancy, and acuteneſs of Conceit, than for the ſmoothneſs of the Verſe. At laſt, by King *James*'s Command, or rather earneſt perſwaſion, ſetting himſelf to the Study of Divinity, and entering into Holy Orders, he was firſt made Preacher of *Lincolne's-Inn*, and afterwards advanc'd to be *Dean* of *Pauls*: And as of an eminent *Poet* he became a much more eminent Preacher, ſo he rather improv'd than relinquiſht his *Poetical* Fancy; only converting it from Humane and Wordly, to Divine and Heavenly Subjects. He died the laſt of *March*, 1631.

Iſaac Walton, in the Life of *John Donne*, *pag.* 52. ſays, That the Recreations of his Youth were *Poetry*, in which he was ſo happy, as if *Nature* and all her Varieties had been made only to exerciſe his ſharp Wit, and high Fancy: And in thoſe Pieces, which were facetiouſly Compos'd, and careleſly ſcatter'd (moſt of them being written before the Twentieth Year of his Age) it may appear by his choice *Metaphors*, that both *Nature* and all the *Arts* joyned to aſſiſt him with their utmoſt Skill.

The *Publiſher* of Mr. *Waller*'s 2*d* Part of his *Poems*, in the *Preface*, tells us, That we are beholden to Mr. *Waller* for the *new-turn* of *Verſe*, which he brought in, and the improvement he made in our *Numbers*. Before his time, Men Rhym'd indeed, and that was all; as for the harmony of Meaſure, and that dance of Words, which good Ears are ſo much pleas'd with, *they* knew nothing of it. *Their* Poetry *then* was made up almoſt entirely

entirely of *Monoſyllables*; which, when they come together in any Cluſter, are certainly the moſt harſh, untunable Things in the World. If any Man (ſays *my Author*) doubts of this, let him read ten Lines in *Donne*, and he'll be quickly convinc'd.

Dryden remarks, That *Donne* has great Variety, Multiplicity, and Choice of Thoughts; but *he* affects the *Metaphyſicks*, not only in his *Satires*, but in his *Amorous Verſes*, where *Nature* only ſhould reign; and perplexes the Minds of the *Fair Sex* with nice Speculations of Philoſophy, when he ſhou'd engage their Hearts, and entertain them with the *Softneſſes* of *Love*. Dryd. *Dedic.* before *Juvenal*, *pag.* 3.

Would not *Donne*'s *Satires*, which abound with ſo much Wit, appear more Charming, if he had taken care of his *Words*, and of his *Numbers*? But *he* follow'd *Horace* ſo very cloſe, that of neceſſity he muſt fall with him: And, ſays *Dryden*, I may ſafely ſay it of this preſent Age, That if we are not ſo great *Wits* as *Donne*, yet, certainly, we are better *Poets*. Dryd. *ibid. pag.* 46.

Quintus Ennius,

THE Ancienteſt of the *Latin Poets* that we hear of, except *Livius Andronicus*, and *Cn. Nævius*. *He* was born at *Rudiæ*, a City of *Calabria* in *Spain*, in the Second Year of the 135*th Olympiad*. 237 Years before *Chriſt*. He was brought to *Rome* firſt by *Cato Cenſorius*, for his Learning. He died of the *Gout*, which he got by

by his immoderate drinking of *Wine*, when he was above Seventy Years of Age.

He wrote besides his *Annals* in Verse, *Satyrs*, *Comedies*, and *Tragedies*; of all which we have nothing now remaining, but only some few Fragments.

This *Author* was so entirely belov'd of *Scipio Africanus* (whom he accompanied in the Wars, and Wrote a *Poem* in *Hexameter* Verse, of the Second *Punick* War) that he caused the Image of *Ennius* to be set on his Sepulchre.

Cicero, in his *Oration* for *L. Muræna, cap.* xiv. calls *Ennius*, an Ingenious Poet, and a very good Author.

Horace, in the First *Epist.* of his Second Book, Verse 50. says, That *Ennius* had both Wisdom and Courage, and that he was a *Second Homer.*

What Opinion *Lucretius* had of *Ennius*, appears in his first Book, *verse* 117. *&c.*

Ennius ut noster cecinit, qui primus amæno
Detulit ex *Helicone* perenni fronde Coronam;
Per gentes *Italas* omnium quæ clara clueret.
Etsi præterea tamen esse *Acherusia* templa
Ennius æternis exponit versibus edens.

As our Fam'd Ennius *sings, upon whose Brow*
The first and freshest Crowns of Laurel *grow,*
That ever Learned Italy *could show;*
Tho' he *in lasting Numbers doth express*
The Stately Acherusian *Palaces.*
Englished by **Tho. Creech.**

Notwithstanding it is reported of *Virgil*, that being one day found reading of *Ennius*, and some body asking him

him what he had been doing, his anſwer was, *Se aurum in Sterquilinio colligere*, That, *He had been gathering Gold out of a Dunghill:* Yet *Macrobius*, *lib.* 6. *Saturnal. cap.* 1. aſſures us, That *Virgil* was ſo great an admirer of *Ennius*, that he had ſtole many things out of him; ſome inſtances whereof *Macrobius* does *there* give us.

Paulus Merula, in the beginning of his *Comment* upon the *Fragments* of *Ennius*'s *Annals*, ſays, That *Ennius* was really the *Father* of all that *Elegance*, and *Politeneſs*, which afterwards appear'd amongſt the *Latin Poets.*

Lilius Gyraldus, in his Fourth Dialogue *De Poetis Antiquis*, informs us, That *Ennius* had a ſharp Wit, and *that* he was very quick and ready with his Pen; *that* his Sentences were ſmart, tho' his Words and Phraſe were plain and without Art, foraſmuch as *he* would always keep to the common Dialect.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. *pag.* 78. tells us, That *Ennius* the Ancient Poet, was one of a High and Lofty *Genius*; and that *he* had ſo great a value for him, that for his part he could be contented with the loſs of *Lucan*, *Statius*, *Silius Italicus*, and the reſt of thoſe *Sparks*, provided we could have *Ennius* Entire and Compleat.

Adrianus Turnebus, in the Thirteenth Book of his *Adverſaria*, *cap.* 6. ſays, That *Ennius*'s Verſes have ſomewhat in them of the ſame Nature with *Wine*, which we generally count the better, and the pleaſanter, for being Old.

And in another Place in his *Adverſaria*, he tells us, That the Verſes of *Ennius* contain both Profit and Pleaſure; and *that* his Style (tho' one would not think it) is Polite.

Rapin

Rapin remarks, That *Ennius* had not in his days discover'd the *Grace* and *Harmony*, which is in the *Numbers*, whereof appears no footstep in his Verse. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Arist. *Treatise of* Poesie, *part* 1. *sect.* 37.

Euripides,

A Learned *Tragical Poet*, born at *Salamis*, the very day that *Xerxes's* great Army was Routed by the *Athenians*, in the first Year of the *75th Olympiad*, about 480 Years before *Christ*. He was in great favour with *Archelaus* King of *Macedon*. He Wrote in all 75 Plays. For his great Chastity, and avoiding the Company of *Women*, he was call'd Μισογυνὴς, *Woman-hater*; altho' he was Twice Married: Concerning his death there are divers Relations; some think he was worried by *Archelaus's* Dogs, that were set upon him by the malice of the *Poet Aridæus*, that envi'd him and *Cratena*; *Others*, that he was pulled in Pieces by *Women*. He died in the *75th* Year of his Age, and was buried at *Pella*.

Of his 75 Plays, there are now remaining but 19.

Cicero, in a Letter to *Tyro*, *lib.* 16. *Familiar. Epist.* tells him, That he had a very great value for *Euripides*, and that every Verse of this *Author* bore a mighty Credit with him.

Rimer, in his *Short View* of *Tragedy*, *pag.* 158. says, That at *Athens* (they tell us) the *Tragedies* of *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*, were enroll'd with their *Laws*, and made part of their *Statute-Book*.

Dryden,

Dryden, in his *Eſſay* of *Dramatick Poeſie*, *pag.* 10. tells us, That while the *Tragedies* of *Euripides*, *Sophocles*, and *Seneca* are in our hands, he can never ſee one of thoſe *Plays* which are *now* Written, but it increaſes his Admiration of the *Ancients*; and yet he muſt acknowledge further, that to admire them as we ought, we ſhould underſtand them beeter than we do. Doubtleſs many things appear flat to us, the Wit of which depended on ſome *Cuſtom* or *Story*, which never came to our Knowledge, or perhaps on ſome *Criticiſme* in their Language, which (ſays *Dryden*) being ſo long dead, and only remaining in their Books, 'tis not poſſible they ſhould make us underſtand perfectly.

Borrichius, in his *Diſſertat. Acad. de Poetis*, *pag.* 30. obſerves to us, That *Euripides* for Eloquence, and Prudence, was equal to, if not beyond *Sophocles*. *Euripides* took more care in the placing of his Words, and ordering of his Sentences, than ever *Sophocles* did; and yet *Ariſtotle* thought him not exact enough in the contrivance of his *Fables*. *Sophocles*, by his Stile, ſeems to be rather a Man for *Buſineſs*, than for *Words*; whereas the Stile of *Euripides* ſavours more of the *Scholar* and the *Orator*: And therefore if we are for the lofty, and ſublime Tragedy, *Sophocles* carries it; but if for fine Language, then *Euripides* has it.

Borrichius alſo informs us, That *Euripides* is often blam'd by the Learned, for his not obſerving *Poetical Probability*, which is a thing that *Ariſtotle* recommends ſo highly to all *Poets*; which (indeed) is moſt agreeable to that prudent advice of *Horace* in his *De Arte Poeticâ*:

Aut Famam ſequere, aut ſibi convenientia finge.

Rapin remarks, That the *Tragedies* of *Euripides* have more of *Action*, of *Morality*, and of wonderful *Incidents*, than thoſe of *Sophocles.*

He alſo obſerves, That *Euripides* is not exact in the Contrivance of his *Fables*; his *Characters* want variety, he falls often into the ſame Thoughts, on the ſame adventures; *that* he does not Religiouſly enough obſerve *Decencies*; and by a too great affectation to be *Moral* and *Sententious*, he is not ſo ardent and paſſionate as he ought to be; for this reaſon (ſays *Rapin*) he goes not to the Heart, ſo much as *Sophocles*; there are *precipitations* in the preparation of his *Incidents*, as in the *Suppliants*, where *Theſeus Levies* an *Army*, *Marches* from *Athens* to *Thebes*, and *returns* on the ſame day. The *Diſcoveries* of his Plots are not at all Natural, theſe are perpetual *Machins*; *Diana* makes the diſcovery in the Tragedy of *Hippolitus*; *Minerva* that of the *Iphigenia* in *Taurica*; *Thetis* that of *Andromache*; *Caſtor* and *Pollux*, that of *Helena*, and that of *Electra*; and ſo of others. **Rap.** *Reflex.* on *Ariſtotle*'s Treatiſe of *Poeſie*, *part* 2. *ſect.* xxi, and xxii.

Rimer tells us, That *Euripides* has been blam'd for making his *Characters* more *wicked* than they ought to be in *Tragedy*: That he was not taxed by *Ariſtophanes* and *Ariſtotle* only, but by *Sophocles*, and the general Senſe of *Athens* was againſt him. They ſaid, in thoſe days, that *Comedy* (whoſe Province was Humour and ridiculous matter only) was to repreſent Things *worſe* than the truth: *Hiſtory* to deſcribe *the truth*, but *Tragedy* was to invent Things *better* than the truth. Like good *Painters* they muſt deſign their Images like the Life, but yet better and more beautiful than the Life. The *Malefactor* of *Tragedy*, ſays *Rimer*, muſt be a *better ſort* of *Malefactor* than thoſe that live in the preſent

present Age. For an obdurate, impudent, and impenitent *Malefactor* can neither move *Compassion* nor *Terrour*; nor be of any imaginable use in *Tragedy*. **Rymer**'s *Tragedies of the last Age consider'd*, &c. *pag.* 36.

Caius Valerius Flaccus,

BOrn at *Setia*, now call'd *Sezze*, a City in *Campania di Roma*, in *Italy*, but liv'd most part of his time at *Padua*. He writ eight Books of *Argonauticks*, being a Poem of the Expedition of *Jason*, for the *Golden-Fleece*, which he dedicated to the Emperour *Domitian*; which Poem being extant, he is said to have written in imitation of *Appollonius Rhodius*.

Quintilian was very much concern'd, that *Valerius Flaccus* being snatch'd away by an untimely death, could not finish his *Argonauticks*; which, as he complains, was a great loss to the Learned.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, *cap.* 6. *pag.* 639. uses the very same Argument to excuse the harsh Style of *this Author*, *viz.* because he died before he had time to revew his *Argonauticks*; but withal *he tells us*, That he was a Man of Wit, of a happy Fancy, of a solid Judgment, and of extraordinary diligence and application; and that his *Verses* have a pleasant and harmonious sound: Though at the same time he owns, that this *Poem*, has none of those other *Graces* and *Beauties* requisite to *Poetry*. But in conclusion, *he says*, That *Flaccus* was above the pitch of an ordinary Poet.

Caſpar Barthius, in the firſt Book, and ſeventeenth Chapt. of his *Adverſaria*, tells us, That *Valerius Flaccus* is really a more conſiderable Poet, than generally he is allow'd to be; and that they are either *Pedants* or your *half-learned* Men, who neglect to read him, through an Opinion, that his Stile is harſh and diſagreeable; whereas, ſays *Barthius*, I take him to be a Poet of a Noble, and an elevated Air.

He further *obſerves*, in the Twenty Sixth Book, Chap. 3 how very unjuſt even ſome of the Learned are to *Valerius Flaccus*, in the not owning his *Poetical* Genius, his Learning, his Gravity, and his Judgment. And *he* alſo makes this further *Remarque*, that *Valerius Flaccus* appears more conſiderable when he Marches alone, and without a guide, than when he treads in the footſteps of *Appollonius Rhodius*.

Borrichius, in his *Diſſert. Acad. de Poetis, pag.* 61. ſays There muſt be acknowledg'd in *Valerius Flaccus*, although he was not come to his Perfection, a true *Poetical* Genius; *that* he had very often high, and Noble Flights, that his Judgment was Solid, and his Style florid enough, though ſometimes it had unevenneſſes, and ſeem'd a little rugged, which undoubtedly he would have ſoften'd, and mended, had he liv'd ſome time longer.

Rapin obſerves to us, That *Valerius Flaccus* in his *Argonauticks* was both cold and flat, through his affecting a loftineſs of Expreſſion, and not having a *Genius* for it. **Rap.** *Reflex.* on *Ariſtotle's* Treatiſe of *Poeſie, part* 1. *ſect.* xxx.

He alſo *tells* us, That the Poem of *Valerius Flaccus*, on the *Argonauts*, is extreamly mean; the *Fable*, the *Contrivance*, the *Conduct*, all *there* are of a very low Character. **Rap.** *ibid. part* 2. *ſect.* xv.

Joannes

Joannes Ludovicus Vives, in his third Book *De Tradendis Diſciplinis*, *pag.* 541. ſays, He does not ſee to what purpoſe one ſhould read either *Valerius Flaccus*, or *Appollonius Rhodius*, as if a Man could not ſpend his time better; and yet *he ſays*, he does not ſo much diſlike either their *Verſe* or their *Stile*, as the *meanneſs* of the *Subject*.

Hieronymus Fracaſtorius,

WAS born at *Verona*, but dyed at *Padua* of an Apoplexy, on the Sixth day of *Auguſt*, 1553. being above Seventy Years of Age.

Boiſſardus, in his *Icones Virorum Illuſtrium*, ſtiles *Fracaſtorius* a Perſon of the greateſt Learning; as being a Phyſician, a Poet, an Aſtronomer, and the moſt Learned Philoſopher of that Age: In which ſeveral Sciences, according to *Boiſſardus*, he got ſo great a Reputation, that he very well deſerv'd to be counted equal to any of the *Ancients*.

He further *ſaith*, That *Fracaſtorius*'s Poems, are ſo much eſteem'd of among all the Men of Learning, that they are compar'd even with *Virgil*'s; and that in reſpect of their Elegance, ſmartneſs of Expreſſion, and purity of Style, they are ſo highly extoll'd, that by many *Fracaſtorius* is call'd, *The Divine Poet*.

Thuanus, in his Hiſtory of the Year, 1553. ſays, That *Fracaſtorius* had (beſides his exact Knowledge of Philoſophy, and the *Mathematicks*, and eſpecially *Aſtronomy*, which he had moſt Learnedly illuſtrated,) an exquiſite

quiſite Judgment, and an admirable Wit: By which means he had both found out, and explain'd many things either altogether unknown to, or elſe not well underſtood by the *Ancients*; That he never made any other gain by his Practice of Phyſick, than his own Glory and Reputation; and that he had ſo much improv'd the Art of *Poetry*, that even by the Confeſſion of his *Rivals* he was little inferiour to *Virgil* himſelf: And this made *Jacobus Sannazarius* (who was not over-apt to commend other Mens Learning,) upon the ſight of *Fracaſtorius*'s Poem of *Syphilis*, to cry out, That not only *Joannes Jovianus Pontanus*, but that *He himſelf* was overcome in his Poem, which was ſo accurate, that, as *Thuanus* tells us, it had coſt him no leſs than twenty Years Study and Labour.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poetica*, *pag.* 817. ſpeaking of *Fracaſtorius's Poems*, ſays, They are ſo perfect, that they rather deſerve his *Admiration*, than his *Cenſure*. *He* alſo ſtyles *Fracaſtorius*, the very beſt Poet next *Virgil*; adding at the ſame time, that the *Syphilis* was a Divine Poem.

To conclude, for a Teſtimony of the great eſteem *Julius Scaliger* had of this Extraordinary Perſon, he Wrote a *Poem* in his Praiſe, Entituled *Aræ Fracaſtoreæ*.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. obſerves, That *Fracaſtorius* ſhew'd himſelf an Excellent Poet in his *Syphilis*.

Gerardus Johannes Voſſius, in his *de Mathematicis*, *pag.* 375. reckons *Fracaſtorius* among the chief Ornaments of that Age: *He* alſo tells us, that his Fellow Citizens, after his Death, erected his Statue at *Verona* in Marble, as they had formerly done to *Catullus* and *Pliny*.

Mr.

Mr. *Tate* in the Life of *Fracaſtorius*, before his Tranſlation of *Syphilis*, ſays, That *Fracaſtorius* was deſcended from the *Fracaſtorian* Family of great Antiquity in *Verona*; and that *he* ſeem'd not only to Rival the Fame of *Catullus* and *Pliny*, who had long before made that City Renown'd, but to have very far exceeded all his Contemporaries, for Learning and Poetry.

He further *obſerves*, That *Fracaſtorius* was never Cenſorious of other Mens performances, but always glad of an occaſion to commend; for which he was deſervedly celebrated by *Johannes Baptiſta* in a Noble *Epigram*. In his leiſure, ſays *Tate*, he diverted himſelf with Reading *Hiſtory*, at which time *Polybius*, or *Plutarch*, were never out of his hands. To conclude, the Age in which he liv'd (ſays *Tate*) ſaw nothing equal to his Learning, but his Honeſty.

Borrichius, in his *Diſſert. Acad. De Poetis*, *pag.* 98. highly commends thoſe two *Poems* of *Fracaſtorius*, his *Syphilis*, and his *Alcon*; He ſays, they ſhew him to be both a man of Learning, and of Prudence; but at the ſame time he obſerves, this *Poet* was not always exact in *Numbers*, and *Cadence*, and that he rather choſe to *Inſtruct*, than to *delight* the *Reader*.

Rapin obſerves to us, That *Fracaſtorius*, who with ſo good Succeſs Writ his *Syphilis*, the moſt excellent *Poem* in *Latin* Verſe that theſe latter Ages have produced in *Italy*, and which is Writ in imitation of *Virgil's Georgicks*, was not ſo happy in his *Epick* Poem of *Joſeph*, Viceroy of *Egypt*, a Fragment whereof is Extant; for this Poem, ſays *Rapin*, is of a poor *Genius*, and a low *Character*. **Rap.** *Reflex.* on *Ariſt.* Treatiſe of *Poeſie*, *part* 1. *ſect.* xiv.

The ſame *Author* does alſo *remark*, That *Fracaſtorius* has only Copied *Virgil's Phraſes*, without expreſſing his *Spirit*;

Spirit; that he has (indeed) ſome touches of that noble *Air*, but not many; that whenever he ſtrains to come up to *Virgil*, he preſently *falls* and returns again to his own *Genius*; and that amidſt the vain *Efforts* of a *Servile* Imitation, there continually eſcapes from him ſome *Strokes* of his own natural Spirit. **Rap.** *ibid. ſect.* xxxii.

Hugo Grotius,

WAS born at *Delph* in *Holland*, the Tenth day of *April*, 1583. He dyed at *Roſtock*, a City of the *Lower-Saxony*, the Eighteenth day of *Auguſt*, Old Stile, 1645.

Edward Phillips, in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, ſays, That *Grotius*'s Equal in Fame for Wit and Learning, *Chriſtendom* of late Ages hath rarely produc'd; that he was particularly of ſo happy a *Genius* in *Poetry*, that had his *Annals*, his Book *De Veritate Chriſtianæ Religionis*, his *De Satisfactione Chriſti*, and other his extolled Works in *Proſe*, never come to Light, his Extant and Univerſally approv'd *Latin Poems*, had been ſufficient to gain him an everlaſting Name.

Hofman, in his *Lexicon*, calls *Grotius*, The *Phænix of the Age.*

Salmaſius, in his Exercitations upon *Solinus*, ſtiles him, One that was exquiſitely Learned in all ſorts of Learning.

Selden, in the firſt Book, *chap.* 26. of his *Mare Clauſum*, ſays, That *Hugo Grotius*, was a Man of great Learning,

ing, and extraordinary Knowledge in things both *Divine* and *Humane.*

Gerardus Johannes Voſſius, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, *pag* 82. calls *Grotius*, the great Ornament, or rather the Miracle of the Age. Than *whom*, as he tells us, in his *De Hiſtoricis Latinis*, *pag.* 713. the Sun does not ſhine upon, nor is there living upon the Face of the Earth, any Creature of greater Learning.

Iſaac Caſaubon, in his *Epiſt.* 738. to *Daniel Heinſius*, Dated in *April* 1613. tells him, he could not ſufficiently proclaim his own happineſs, in the enjoying ſometimes the Company of that great Man, *Hugo Grotius.* A Perſon highly to be admir'd! The excellency of whoſe Divine Wit, no man could be able throughly to comprehend, unleſs he obſerves both his Countenance, and his way of ſpeaking. *He ſays*, There was Honeſty in his very Looks; and his Diſcourſe did ſufficiently ſhew his Exquiſite Learning, and his great Sincerity. And that you may not (*ſays Caſaubon*) think that I am the only one who Admires him; all Men of either Learning or Piety, who are acquainted with him, have alſo the very ſame Opinion of him.

David Blondel, in his Second Book, *chap.* 3. of the *Sybils*, having occaſion to mention *Grotius*, he there gives him this *Character*, that he was a Man of extraordinary Endowments, whether we conſider the Tranſcendency of his Wit, the Univerſality of his Knowledge, which cannot be too highly eſteem'd, and the Diverſity of his Writings.

Monſieur *de Balzac*, in his Fifth Book, Letter the 25. to *Chappelain*, thus remarks of *Grotius*, That beſides his ſolid Learning, his forcible way of Reaſoning, and his florid Style, there is obſervable a certain *Air* of *Honeſty* in all the Works of this Great Man; and that *this* is

more, than any one dare ſay either of *Scaliger* or *Salmaſius.*

Claudius Sarravius, in his *Preface* to *Grotius's Epiſtles*, makes this Obſervation, That though *Grotius* in all his other Works, appear'd to be a great Man; yet in his *Epiſtles* and *Poems*, he was Incomparable and Divine.

Borrichius, in his *Diſſertat. Acad. de* Poetis, *pag.* 142. ſays, That never any thing was more Learned, than the Works of *Hugo Grotius* in Divine Matters. What (*ſays he*) can be finer, or more *Maſculine* than his *Epick Poem* concerning the Hiſtory of *Jonas?* Or was there ever any thing Writ in a more Chaſt and Purer Style, than the *Elegies* he Compoſed upon the Subject of *Suſanna?* And he further tells us, That nothing can be Graver, or more Majeſtick than his Two *Tragedies*, *Chriſtus Patiens*, and his *Sophompaneas*, although they have fallen under the *Cenſure* of ſome *Criticks*: And that as for his *Epigrams*, and his *Sylvæ*, they likewiſe deſerve their Commendation, and Praiſe; though it muſt be allow'd, there is not the ſame *Wit* and *Smartneſs* in all of them; but that *ſome* are much better than *others.*

Rapin tells us, That *Grotius* has Writ nobly enough in *Latin Verſe*; but that the great Learning wherewith he was fraught, hinder'd him from thinking things in that *Delicate* manner, which makes the *Beauty*

Rap. *Reflex. on* Ariſt. *Treatiſe of* Poeſie, *part* 2. *ſect.* xvi.

He alſo remarks, That *Grotius* in his *Tragedy* of *Joſeph*, has a *Contrivance* too ſimple, the *Incidents* are cold, the *Narrations* tedious, the Paſſions forc'd, and the *Style* conſtrain'd. **Rap.** *ibid. ſect.* 23.

Grotius's

Grotius's Poems, Collected, and Publiſh'd by his Brother *William Grotius*, are Prohibited by the Church of *Rome.*

Lilius Gregorius Gyraldus,

AN *Italian*, born in *Ferrara*, the 14*th.* of *June*, in the Year 1478. *He* Dyed of the Gout, in the Month of *February*, in the Year 1552.

He was Author of ſeveral *Poems*; beſides what he Wrote in *Proſe*, as his Hiſtory of the Heathen Gods, and his Large Volume concerning both the Ancient *Greek* and *Latin Poets*, as alſo of the *Poets* who liv'd in his time, and many other things, which have given him an Honourable Memory.

Hofman, in his *Lexicon*, ſays, That *Gyraldus* did very well deſerve to be call'd the *Varro* of that Age, inaſmuch as he was one of an Invincible Memory, an excellent Wit, and very famous for all ſorts of Learning.

Iſaac Caſaubon, in his Notes upon the Eighth Book of *Diogenes Laertius*, ſtiles *Gyraldus*, a Man of Solid Learning, and one who Wrote with great accuracy.

Thuanus, in his Hiſtory of the Year 1552. affirms, That *Gyraldus* was very well skill'd both in the *Greek* and *Latin*, as alſo in the Politer ſort of Learning, and particularly in Antiquity, which he had Illuſtrated by ſeveral of his *Pieces*. But in concluſion he *ſays*, That though *Gyraldus* deſerv'd a *better Fate*, yet all his Life time he ſtrugg'd with ſickneſs and Misfortunes.

Leander Albertus, in his Deſcription of *Italy*, ſays, That *Gyraldus* had ſo happy a Memory, that whatever he once read, he never forgot.

Moreri, in his *Grand Dictionaire*, aſſures us, That in the Opinion of all Men, *Gyraldus* was accounted one of the greateſt Wits, that *Italy* had produc'd in theſe latter Ages; and that he had made ſo wonderful a Progreſs in all the *Sciences*, that there was not any of them, but he was Maſter of.

Gerardus Johannes Voſſius, *lib.* 1. *Idololatr. cap.* 29. obſerves to us, That *Gyraldus* had a Judgment equal to his Learning. And in his *De Hiſtor. Latin. pag.* 736. *he tells* us, That *Gyraldus*w was Man of much greater Learning, and Diligence, than ever *Petrus Crinitus* was.

The *ſame Author*, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, *pag.* 82. ſpeaking of *Gyraldus*'s Hiſtory concerning the *Poets*, calls it a Work not only of great Wit and Judgment, but alſo of vaſt Learning and Induſtry: *He ſays*, There is indeed *here* and *there* a *Poet*, whoſe Hiſtory might have been more accurately Written; but take it throughout, it is a Work of ſo much Perfection, that even the moſt Learned may well be diſcourag'd, from ever hoping for better ſucceſs in ſo vaſt an Undertaking.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, *pag.* 99. ſays, That as *Gyraldus* hath ſhew'd a great deal of Learning and Judgment in his Hiſtory concerning the *Ancient Greek* and *Latin* Poets, ſo has *he* writ of the *Poets* of *his Time*, with all the Truth and Freedom imaginable.

But *Joſeph Scaliger*, in his *Confut. Fab. Bourdon.* &c. is of another Opinion, for he *there* tells us, That nothing in Nature is ſo ſilly and ridiculous, as *Gyraldus*'s Cenſure on the *Poets*; tho' at the ſame time he is pleas'd

to

to ſay, That he was a Man of much Reading, and great Knowledge.

The Works of *this Author* are inſerted in the *Index Expurgatorius*, Printed at *Madrid*, *Anno* 1667.

Daniel Heinſius,

WAS born at *Gaunt* in *Flanders*, in the Month of *May*, 1580. He was Hiſtory Profeſſor, and Library-Keeper at the Univerſity of *Leyden*. He died the 25*th* of *February*, 1655.

He was no leſs eminent for his Excellent Style in *Greek* and *Latin* Verſe, of which ſufficient Teſtimonies are extant, than for his ſeveral Learned Works which he wrote in *Proſe*.

Gabriel Naudæus, in his 59*th Epiſt.* to *Joannes Beverovicius*, dated the third *Kal.* of *Sept.* 1657. ſays, That he had ſo great a Veneration for *Dan. Heinſius*, that he thought his very Name to be almoſt *Divine*.

Jacobus Crucius, in an *Epiſt.* to *Dan. Colonius*, dated the xx*th* of *Febr.* 1621. gives this Character of *Dan. Heinſius*, That *Nature* had taken as much Care in the adorning and beautifying this Excellent Perſon, as ever *Zeuxis* had done, to ſet forth his *Venus*; or *Phydias* did, to adorn the Statue of *Minerva*.

Johannes Polyander, Rector of the Univerſity of *Leyden*, in a Letter to *Joann. Beverovicius*, dated at *Leyden*, *July* the 24*th*, 1635. calls *Dan. Heinſius*, the great Ornament of his Age, a Perſon of admirable Eloquence, of the deepeſt Learning, and one whom God had

had adorn'd with great skill in the *Eaſtern* and *Weſtern* Languages.

Caſpar Barthius, in the *59th* Book of his *Adverſaria*, *chap.* 13. ſays, That *Dan. Heinſius* had not his Fellow for Wit, Learning, and Eloquence; *that* he was the chief Writer of the Age; in many things *Superiour* to moſt of the *Ancients*, but in few was he their *Inferior*; that his *Greek* and *Latin Poems*, as alſo his great Learning and Eloquence, the Ages to come would both love and reverence; that the *Graces* and *Beauties* of his *Style* deſerv'd the higheſt *Encomiums*, and could not be enough extoll'd; and to conclude, that ſince the Creation, there had ſcarce appear'd any thing that was to be compar'd to him.

Iſaac Caſaubon, in his *Epiſt.* 318. dated from *Paris*, *Jan.* 1604, tells *Dan. Heinſius*, that he was a meer *Aſteropæus*, a true *Ambodexter*, one who was equally skillful in *Proſe* and in *Verſe*. He ſays, when he reads his *Greek* Verſes, he fancies himſelf to be reading *Homer*, not *Heinſius*; and when he reads his *Latin* Verſes, then he can't but think he is reading either *Ovid* or *Propertius*.

Antonius Thyſius, in the Funeral Oration of *Daniel Heinſius*, ſays, That no One in that Age was more conſiderable for *Latin* Verſe, and that he had not his Match for *Greek* Verſe, unleſs it were *Joſeph Scaliger*.

He further *tells* us, That nothing ever was more *Divine*, than his *Greek Epigrams*, wherein he deſcrib'd the Actions, Sentiments, and Opinions of the Ancient Philoſophers; that his *Pandora* was a moſt Elegant Piece; and, in a word, that never ſince the *Ancient Greek Poets*, there has been any thing of greater Perfection, nor nearer approaching *their* Character, than what *Heinſius* has done in their Language. And as for his *Elegies*,

gies, he ſays, They are to the higheſt degree full of *Paſſion* and *Harmony,* and that he has repreſented in them, all the Wit and Beauty of *Ovid.* See **Henning Witten** *Tom.* 2. *De Philoſophis, pag.* 180, 181.

Daniel Georgius Morhofius, in his *Polyhiſtor, pag.* 62. tells us, That he was wont often to read, with a great deal of Pleaſure, the Verſes writ by thoſe two Great Men, *Hugo Grotius,* and *Dan. Heinſius,* in their younger Years; which though (ſays he) were very ſhort of what they afterwards perform'd; yet it was very pretty to obſerve that curious *Bloſſom,* which not long after produc'd ſuch Excellent *Fruit.*

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis, pag.* 143. ſays, That *Daniel Heinſius* did very well deſerve to be reckon'd among the moſt conſiderable *Poets,* he having oblig'd the Learned with ſeveral of his *Poems,* of various Kinds; wherein was to be found nothing either mean, dry, or barren; but every thing pure, ſolid, and exact.

He likewiſe *tells* us, that at the ſame time *Heinſius* gave ſo high a Character of *Thuanus* and *Scaliger* in *Epick* Verſe, *he himſelf* deſerv'd no leſs; and that *he* who has wrote with ſo much Life and Courage concerning the *Contempt* of *Death,* muſt *himſelf* needs be immortal. How choice (*ſays he*) is the Stile in his *Hipponactе?* and yet how ſharp is it every where? What happy bold ſtrokes are there in his *Herodes Infanticida?* And was there ever greater Elegancy than in his *Elegies?*

Rapin remarks, That *Dan. Heinſius* has writ nobly enough in *Latin* Verſe; but that the great Learning wherewith *he* (as well as *Grotius*) was fraught, hinder'd him from thinking Things in that *delicate* manner, which makes the *Beauty* of Verſe. **Rap.** *Reflex.* on *Ariſtot.* &c. *part* 2. *ſect.* xvi.

He

He further *obſerves*, That *Heinſius* in his Tragedy of *Herod*, is tedious in his *Narrations*, that his *Paſſions* are forc'd, and the *Stile* conſtrain'd. **Rap.** *ibid. ſect.* xxiii.

Paulus Colomeſius, in his *Opuſcula*, *pag.* 128. ſays, That *Voſſius* told him, That one might eaſily know the Stile of *Daniel Heinſius*, by his ſo often uſing the *Pronoun*, *Qui*, *Quæ*, *Quod*. Which (ſays *Colomeſius*) with a great deal of Pleaſure I have obſerv'd to be very true.

Heſiod.

AN Ancient *Greek* Poet, ſirnamed *Aſcræus*, from *Aſcra*, a Town in *Bæotia*, the place not of his Birth, (as hath been generally ſuppos'd,) but of his Education, according to *Herodotus*, *Strabo*, *Stephanus* and *Valerius Probus*; for he was born at *Cuma* in *Aeolia*; the Son of *Dius* and *Pycimede*; He is affirmed by *Philoſtratus*, *Velleius Paterculus*, and *M. Varro* (contrary to the Opinion of *Porphyrius* and *Solinus*; the Firſt of whom ſets him 100. the other 130. years after) to be Contemporary with *Homer*: which Opinion is confirm'd by an *Epigram* of *Dion*, and the Diſcourſe in the Fifth Book of *Plutarch*'s *Sympoſiaca*, which makes out that *Homer* and *Heſiod* contended at the Exequies of *Oelycus* the *Theſſalian*, and *Amphidamas* of *Chalcis*.

His ſeveral Works are reckon'd up in all Fourteen, as well Extant as not Extant, in a Catalogue, which is inſerted in *Daniel Heinſius*'s Edition of this Poet.

Velleius

Velleius Paterculus, *lib.* 1. ſtiles *Heſiod*, a Perſon of a moſt curious Fancy, one that was famous and remarkable for the ſweetneſs of his Verſe; and who coveted nothing ſo much, as his own Eaſe and Quiet.

Daniel Heinſius, in the Preface to his Edition of this Poet, *Anno* 1603. remarks, That among all the Poets, he ſcarce knew any, but *Homer* and *Heſiod*, who underſtood how to repreſent *Nature* in her true *Native dreſs*; which (*ſays he*) is infinitely to be preferr'd before all thoſe *Artful* ways that were us'd in After-Times. *He* further proceeds to *tell* us, That which to him ſeem'd the moſt wonderful, was, that *Nature* had both *begun* and *perfected* at the ſame time her Work in theſe two Perſons, whom for that very reaſon he makes no ſcruple to call *Divine*; adding, that *Nature* had, in both theſe Authors, exhibited to us, a full and perfect *Idea* of all *Human Vertue*.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, *pag.* 10. tells us, That *Heſiod*'s Poem, call'd Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέρα, was writ with ſo much Prudence, and Learning, that, even at this day, the reading it may be of great uſe to all ſuch as apply themſelves to *Moral Philoſophy*, to *Policy*, to *Oeconomy*, to *Marine* Affairs, and to *Husbandry*. And as for his Θεογονία, or the *Generation* of the *Gods*, *Borrichius* obſerves, that we may learn much more by that Piece, than the *Title* ſeems to import; ſince ſuch as are curious in finding out the Nature of Things, diſcover under the Covert of theſe Fables, Natural Truths and wholeſome Maxims, drawn from the deepeſt Philoſophy: which very Obſervation was formerly made, even by *Plutarch*, in his Treatiſe *De Legendis Poetis*.

Tanneguy le Fevre, in his *Abridgment* of the *Lives* of the *Greek Poets*, ſays, That *Heſiod* in his Poem, Entituled, Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι, did much after the manner of

our *Almanack-Writers*, who do ſometimes ſet down the *Fortunate*, and the *Unfortunate* Days; and that this Work, in the main, is not much to be valued.

Ludovicus Vives, in his third Book *De Tradendis Diſciplinis*, ſpeaking of *Heſiod*'s Θεογονία, ſays, It is of great uſe for underſtanding of the *Poets*, but in other reſpects, it is e'en good for nothing.

Dionyſius Halicarnaſſæus, in his *De linguæ Græcæ Auctoribus*, obſerves, That *Heſiod*'s Stile is both ſweet and uniform; and that he chiefly affected the *Middle* Stile, which is neither too mean, nor too lofty.

And *Quintilian*, *lib.* 10. *cap.* 1. tells us, That never any Man excell'd *Heſiod* in that ſort of Stile.

The *Anonymous German* Author, in his *Bibliographia Curioſa*, remarks, That *Heſiod* is ſeldom reliſh'd but by Men of Learning; and that young People eſpecially take no pleaſure in reading him, becauſe the Subject he treats of, is in no wiſe agreeable to 'em.

Claudius Verderius, in his *Cenſio Auctorum*, ſeems to give another Reaſon of this Diſguſt, which is, his too frequent repetition of the ſame *Epithets*, which (as *he obſerves*) is very tedious, and unpleaſant to the Reader.

Clemens Alexandrinus, *lib.* vi. *Stromatum*, takes notice of ſeveral Verſes, ſtollen *Verbatim* by *Heſiod* out of *Muſæus* the Poet.

Theophilus Gale, in his third Book, *chap.* 1. *ſect.* vii. of his *Court of the Gentiles*, aſſures us, That *Heſiod* receiv'd ſome of his *Choiceſt Traditions* from the *Sacred Oracles*, if not immediately, yet Originally, as will appear probable to any that ſhall take the pains to draw up the *Parallel.*

Homer,

Homer,

THE most Renowned of the *Greek Heroick Poets*; his true Name was *Melesigenes*, from the River *Meles*, near to which he was born; but he was afterwards call'd *Homerus*, from his *Blindness*; not that he was born blind, but fell blind by an Accident, while he resided at *Smyrna*, in the Dialect of which Country, at that time, blind People were stiled Ὁμηροι. He flourish'd under *Diognetus*, King of the *Athenians*, 302 Years after the Destruction of *Troy*, and 23 Years before *Iphitus* and *Lycurgus* instituted the Olympian Games.

He wrote sundry *Poems*, scatter'd here and there in the Countries where he travell'd; which may be a reason not improbable, why so many Countries should challenge him to be theirs, they having the first *Copies* of his Works, which in succeeding times were gather'd together to make up compleat *Poems*, and were call'd from thence *Rhapsodiæ*, Ῥαψωδίαι: Two of these Poems are observ'd to comprehend the two Parts of *Man*: The *Iliads*, describing the Strength and Vigour of the *Body*; and the *Odysses*, the Subtlety and Policy of the *Mind*.

There were no less than *Seven Cities* that contended about *Homer*'s Birth, according to that *Distich* of *Sannazarius*:

Smyrna, Rhodus, Colophon, Salamin, Chius, Argos, Athenæ
Cedite jam; Cælum patria Mæonidæ *est.*

Alexander the *Great* had ſo high a value for *Homer's Iliads*, that (as *Plutarch* tells us) he laid it every night under his Beds head, calling it, The *Inſtitution of Marſhal Diſcipline.*

Alcibiades, the *Athenian*, coming into a School, commanded them to bring him *Homer's* Book; when they anſwer'd they had him not, he ſtruck the Maſter, and went away, counting it an unworthy thing for a School-Maſter to be without *Homer.*

Ælian, in the Second Book of his *Various Hiſtory*, *chap.* 30. ſays, That *Plato* was at firſt very much addicted to *Poetry*, and had wrote *Heroick* Verſes; which afterwards he burnt, perceiving them to be far inferior to *Homer's.*

In the Twelfth Book, *chap.* 48. *He tells* us, That the *Indians* were wont to ſing the Verſes of *Homer* Tranſlated into their own Language; and not only *they*, but the *Perſian* Kings alſo, if (ſays *Ælian*) we may believe thoſe who relate it.

And in his Thirteenth Book, *chap.* 22. *he relates*, That *Ptolemæus Philopator* having built a *Temple* to *Homer*, erected a fair Image of him, and placed about the Image thoſe *Cities* which contended for *Homer.* And *He* further *informs* us, That *Galaton* the *Painter* had drawn *Homer Vomiting*, and the reſt of the Poets gathering it up; ſignifying, That what *They* had, was all deriv'd from *Him.*

Plutarch in his Diſcourſe of *Garrulity*, or *Talkativeneſs*, ſays, That of all the Commendations that were ever given to a Poet, this is the trueſt, That only *Homer* avoided being irkſome to his Readers, as one that was always new, and ſtill flouriſhing, as it were in the *Prime* of *Poetick Beauty.*

Macrobius.

Macrobius, in the Fifth Book of his *Saturnalia*, *cap.* 3. tells us, There are Three things equally impoſſible; to take either from *Jupiter*, his *Thunderbolt*; or from *Hercules*, his *Club*; or from *Homer*, the Honour that's due to every Individual Verſe of *His*.

Tanneguy le Fevre, in his *Abridgement* of the Lives of the *Greek Poets*, remarks, That *Homer* had ſo great a Vogue among the *Ancients*, that they thought they had at any time a ſufficient Proof of a thing, if they could but produce the leaſt paſſage out of *Homer*, for confirming an Opinion, or reſolving any Doubts.

Dionyſius Lambinus, in his Notes upon *Horace de Arte Poetica*, ſays, That herein *Homer* is chiefly to be admir'd, that among all the ſeveral Occurrences of *Human Life*, there is not one, but what he hath moſt *aptly* and *properly*, nay he had almoſt ſaid *Divinely* expreſſed.

Velleius Paterculus, *lib.* 1. *cap.* 5. deſcribes *Homer* to be the greateſt Wit that ever was, beyond all Compare; and who, in reſpect of the Nobleneſs of his Works, and the Luſtre of his Verſe, was the only one who deſerv'd the Name of a *Poet*.

He likewiſe *Obſerves*, That as there had been none before him that *he* could Imitate, ſo there was never any, ſince his time, who was able to imitate *him*; and that (except *Homer* and *Archilochus*) there cannot be an Inſtance given of any one Perſon, who both *begun* and *perfected* the ſame Thing.

Dionyſius Halicarnaſſæus Commends *Homer* chiefly for the *Contrivance* of his *Deſign*, the *greatneſs* and *Majeſty* of his *Expreſſion*, and the *ſweet* and *paſſionate motions* of his *Sentiments*.

Quintilian, *lib.* X. *cap.* 1. was of the Opinion, That in great Matters never any one us'd a more lofty, and Majeſtick Style, nor in little things expreſs'd himſelf more

more properly, than *Homer*; *that* his Style was easie, and yet concise; *that* at the same time he was both *grave*, and *agreeable*; *that* he was as much to be admir'd for his *Copiousness*, as his *Brevity*; and, to conclude, *that* he was as excellent an *Orator*, as he was a *Poet*.

Rapin tells us, That *Homer*, who had a *Genius* accomplish'd for *Poetry*, had the Vastest, Sublimest, Profoundest, and most Universal *Wit* that ever was; 'twas by *his Poems* that all the Worthies of *Antiquity* were form'd: from *hence* the Lawmakers took the First Plat-form of the Laws they gave to Mankind; The Founders of *Monarchies* and *Commonwealths* from *hence* took the Model of their *Polities*. *Hence* the Philosophers found the first Principles of Morality which they have taught the People. *Hence* Physicians have Studied Diseases, and their Cures: Astronomers have Learn'd the Knowledge of Heaven, and Geometricians of the Earth. *Hence* Kings and Princes have Learn'd the Art to Govern, and Captains to Form a Battel, to Encamp an Army, to Besiege Towns, to Fight and to gain Victories. From *this* great Original, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Aristotle*, came to be Philosophers. *Sophocles* and *Euripides* took the haughty Air of the *Theatre*, and *Idea's* of *Tragedy*: *Zeuxis*, *Apelles*, *Polygnotus*, became such excellent Painters; and *Alexander* the Great so valiant. In fine, says *Rapin*, *Homer* has been (if I may so say) the first Founder of all Arts and Sciences, and the Pattern of the Wise Men in all Ages. And as he has been in some manner the Author of *Paganism*, the Religion whereof he establish'd by his *Poems*, one may say, That never *Prophet* had so many *Followers* as *He*. **Rap.** *Reflex.* &c. *part.* 1. *sect.* 4.

Sir

Sir *Willim Temple* ſays, That *Homer* was without diſpute, the moſt *Univerſal Genius* that has been known in the World, and *Virgil* the moſt *Accompliſh'd*. To the *firſt* muſt be allow'd, the moſt fertile Invention, the richeſt Vein, the moſt general Knowledge, and the moſt lively Expreſſions; To the *laſt*, the Nobleſt Idea's, the juſteſt Inſtitution, the wiſeſt Conduct, and the choiceſt Elocution. To ſpeak in the *Painters* Terms, ſays *Temple*, We find in the Works of *Homer*, the moſt Spirit, Force, and Life; In thoſe of *Virgil*, the beſt Deſign, the trueſt Proportions, and the greateſt Grace; The Colouring in *both* ſeems equal, and indeed, in *both* is admirable. *Homer* had more Fire and Rapture, *Virgil* more Light and Sweetneſs; or at leaſt the *Poetical* Fire was more raging in *One*, but clearer in the *Other*; Which makes the firſt more amazing, and the Latter more agreeable. The *Oare* was richer in *one*, but in *t'other* more refined, and better allay'd, to make up excellent Work. Upon the whole, ſays *Temple*, I think it muſt be confeſſed, that *Homer* was of the two, and, perhaps, of all others, the Vaſteſt, the Sublimeſt, and the moſt Wonderful *Genius*; and that he has been generally ſo eſteem'd, there cannot be a greater Teſtimony given, than what has been by ſome obſerv'd, that not only the greateſt Maſters have found, in his Works, the beſt and trueſt Principles of all their Sciences or Arts; but that the nobleſt Nations have derived from them the Original of their ſeveral Races, though it be hardly yet agreed, whether his Story be true, or Fiction. In ſhort, ſays *Temple*, Theſe Two Immortal *Poets*, muſt be allowed to have ſo much Excelled in their kinds, as to have exceeded all Compariſon, to have even extinguiſh'd Emulation, and in a manner confined *true Poetry*, not only to their Two Languages, but to their very Perſons. And I am apt to believe, (ſays *Temple*) ſo much of the true

true *Genius* of *Poetry* in General, and of its Elevation in these two Particulars, that I know not, whether of all the *Numbers* of Mankind, that live within the compass of a Thousand Years; for one Man that is born Capable of making such a *Poet* as *Homer* or *Virgil*, there may not be a Thousand born Capable of making as great Generals of Armies, or Ministers of State, as any the most Renowned in Story. **Temple's** *Essay of* Poetry, *pag.* 18, 19, 20.

Just as a Changeling *seems below the rest*
Of Men, or rather is a Two-legg'd Beast;
So these * Gigantick Souls *amaz'd we find*
As much above the rest of Humane Kind.
Nature's whole strength united! *Endless Fame,*
And Universal Shouts attend their Name.
Read Homer *once, and you can read no more,*
For all things else appear so dull and poor,
Verse *will seem* Prose; *yet often on him look,*
And you will hardly need another Book.

* Homer and Virgil.

Mulgr. Essay on *Poetry.*

'Tis said, that Homer, *Matchless in his Art,*
Stole Venus *Girdle, to ingage the Heart:*
His Works indeed Vast Treasures do unfold,
And whatsoe're he touches, turns to Gold:
All in his *hands new beauty does acquire;*
He *always pleases, and can never fire.*
A happy warmth he *every where may boast;*
Nor is he in too long Digressions lost:
His Verses without Rule a Method find,
And of themselves appear in Order joyn'd:
All without trouble answers his intent;
Each Syllable is tending to th' Event.

Let

Let his *Example* your *indeavours raise:*
To Love his Writings, is a kind of Praise.

Boileau's Art of *Poetry*, Englished by Sir *William Soame.*

Monsieur *Bayle*, in his first Tome of *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*, 1684. *pag.* 87. quotes the Learned *Isaac Casaubon*, as Author of this Sentence, *Qui* Homerum *Contemnunt, vix illis optari quidquam pejus potest, quàm ut fatuitate sua fruantur*, That *Whoever they are that despise* Homer, *there cannot be a greater Curse wish'd them, than to be abandoned to their own Folly.*

The *Criticks*, in the *Journal des Scavans*, *Tome* 12. *pag.* 319, 320. tell us, That either those, who in this Age find so many Faults in the Works of *Homer*, must be Men of a very ill Taste, or else that the *Ancients* were much mistaken, when esteeming him the *Prince of Poets*, they Erected Statues, Built Temples, Rais'd Altars, Offer'd Sacrifice, and also caus'd Medals to be Coin'd, in Honour of him; nay, and that even among the *Christians* there was a sort of *Hereticks*, call'd the *Carpocratians*, who us'd to Adore, and Offer Incense at his *Shrine.*

Julius Scaliger, in his Fifth Book *De Poeticâ*, *chap.* 2. admiring the extraordinary great Wit of *Homer*, says, There appears so much *Art* in all that he has Writ, that he seems rather to have been the First *Inventer*, than the *Improver* of it; and therefore, without any absurdity it may be said, That it is rather the *Idea* of *Nature*, than *Art*, that appears in *Homer.*

But afterwards he falls very severely upon *Homer*, saying, That his *Narrations* were tedious; his Thoughts and Notions were too Effeminate, and Vulgar; and that they had so little of Sense, or Force in them, that they would

ſcarce affect his *Scullion.* And, to conclude, *he ſays,* That *Homer's Epithets* are generally cold, flat, childiſh, and unſeaſonable.

Borrichius, in his *Diſſert. Acad. De Poetis, pag.* 9. obſerves, There are Two Faults, which the more knowing ſort of Men uſe to find in *Homer*; The *one,* that he was not judicious enough in the choice of his *Epithets,* as alſo that he was too full of his *Digreſſions,* and inſipid *Dialogues*; The *other,* that he did often Invent and Deviſe filthy and abominable ſtories concerning the Gods; The *firſt* of theſe Crimes, ſays *Borrichius,* might well enough be excuſed, becauſe *Poetry* was then in its Infancy, and not grown yet to perfection; but the *ſecond* Crime gave great offence, even to the more conſiderate ſort of *Heathens.* And therefore, hence it was, That *Jerom* the Philoſopher in *Diogenes Laertius,* relates, that *Pithagoras,* when he was in Hell, ſaw the Soul of *Heſiod* faſten'd to a Braſs-Pillar, and makeing a moſt hideous noiſe; but at the ſame time *Homer's* Soul was hanging upon a Tree, encompaſs'd about with dreadful *Serpents*; and all this, becauſe they had both of them Writ ſuch Lewd, Scandalous Things, concerning the *Divine Nature.*

Theophilus Gale, in his Third Book, *chap.* 1. *ſect.* vi. of *The Court of the Gentiles,* remarks, That *Homer* had many of his *Fictions* from ſome real *Scripture Tradition,* which he gather'd up whilſt he was in *Egypt*; Which (ſays *Gale*) we may ſafely conjecture, even from his Style, and the Affinity of many of *his* Expreſſions with the *Scripture Language.*

And to the ſame effect, ſays Sir *Walter Raleigh,* in his Firſt Book, the Sixth Chapter, and the Seventh Section, it cannot be doubted (*ſays he*) but that *Homer,* had

had read over all the Books of *Moses*, as by Places stollen thence, almost Word for Word, may appear.

And for the more full Evidence hereof, see *Daport's Gnomologia*, or Parallel betwixt *Homer* and the *Scripture.*

Clemens Alexandrinus, *lib.* vi. *Stromatum*, affirms, That *Homer* has taken several Verses Word for Word out of *Orpheus de extincto Baccho.*

Johannes Lomeierus, in his Treatise *De Bibliothecis*, *cap.* iv. makes mention of a *Library* in the Temple of *Vulcan*, at *Memphis*, a City in *Egypt*; Where, as *Naucrates* told the Story, *Homer* happening to find some Books of a certain Woman, called *Phantasia*, and among others the *Iliads* and *Odysses*, which *she* had Wrote, and plac'd in that Temple; *He* very fairly took the Confidence to Publish them for *his own.* But the said *Lomeierus* at the same time assures us, That this Story is utterly false.

Quintus Horatius Flaccus,

A Most Illustrious *Latin Lyrick Poet*, Born at *Venusium*, a City in *Italy*; not for the Nobility of his Birth, for he is reported the Son but of a mean person, some say a *Salter*; but for that Delicacy of Wit, Purity of Style, and Weight of Judgment, both in his *Lyricks*, and other Writings, which gain'd him the esteem of the Noblest of Favourites, *Mecænas*, and, by his means, of the greatest Prince upon Earth, *Augustus*; by whom he

was advanc'd to a considerable Estate, whereof he made *Augustus* his Heir. He dyed at *Rome* in the 57. Year of his Age, being the Third Year of the 192. *Olympiad*, six Years before *Christ.*

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. relates, That the Emperour *Augustus* gave this Character of *Horace*, That he was a very *Correct* Author.

Nicolaus Heinsius, in his Comment upon *Ovid*, says, That the *Ancients* gave *Horace* the particular *Epithet* of *Numerosus*, from his being so very exact and accurate in *Numbers*, as his *Lyricks* do sufficiently testifie.

Quintilian, *lib.* x. *cap.* 1. observes, That *Horace* is the Chief at noting the *Manners* of Men; *that* among all the *Latin Lyrick* Poets, there is scarce any but *Horace* who is worth the Reading; for that *he* hath now and then his Flights and Elevation; his Stile is both graceful and agreeable; his Figures and Expressions are *bold*, but at the same time *happy.*

Monsieur Blondel, in his Particular Treatise, wherein he draws the Parallel betwixt *Horace* and *Pindar*, remarks, That *Horace* was not inferior to *Pindar*, either in respect of the Copiousness and Sublimity of his Inventions, or the nobleness and boldness of his Expressions; but that *Horace* was more correct and pure in his Style, than *Pindar.*

He further *tells* us, That *Horace* has a more Universal Genius, and a more General Knowledge than *Pindar*; as also that he is more of a piece, that he has more of Sweetness, and is more agreeable; and, in general, that he has fewer faults than *Pindar.*

And, to conclude, *he assures* us, There is not to be found among the *Ancients*, any thing which is more proper, for the imprinting on our Minds true *Sentiments* of *Moral Honesty*, than the Works of *Horace.*

The

The *German Criticks* of *Lipſick*, in the *Acta Eruditorum*, *Jun.* 1684. *pag.* 262. obſerve to us, That among the Three Principal *Satyriſts* of the *Ancients*, *viz Juvenal*, *Perſius*, and *Horace*, this laſt obſerv'd the *Medium* between the *Extreams* of the other Two; that is to ſay, between the *Invectives* of *Juvenal*, which by their extent look like a ſort of *Declamation*; and the obſcure, and too much conſtrain'd Brevity of *Perſius*. And ſo they conclude, That *Horace* did as well deſerve the chief place among the *Satyriſts*, as amongſt the *Latin Lyrick Poets*.

Borrichius, in his *Diſſertat. Acad. De Poetis*, *pag.* 50. ſays, That tho' *Horace* himſelf was not a Man of Chaſtity, yet that his Style was chaſt and pure; *that* in the *Lyricks* none of the *Latin* Poets ever excell'd him, but that in his *Heroick* Poems, as he abounded with *wiſe Precepts* and *Admonitions*, ſo he often fail'd in *Numbers* and *Cadence*. But upon the whole matter, *Borrichius* is of the Opinion, That *Horace* very juſtly deſerves to be reckon'd among the beſt *Latin Authors*.

Julius Scaliger, in his *Hypercritic. pag.* 867. remarks, That *Horace* is the moſt exact, and Elaborate of all the *Greek* and *Latin Poets*; that his *Lyricks* have both an Harmonious and Majeſtick ſound: Which excellent qualities if they are not to be found in his other Works, one may plainly ſee, he had no mind to make uſe of them; and that therefore it can be no prejudice to his Reputation, ſince it was rather the effect of his *Judgment*, than his *inability*, that he did not uſe them.

He likewiſe tells us, *pag.* 879. That *Horace's Odes* are ſo full of fancy and beauty, ſo much purity in the ſtyle, ſo great a Variety and ſuch new Turns in the Figures, that they are not only Proof againſt the Cenſure of *Criticks*, but alſo above the higheſt *Encomium's*; and

and that they are no leſs to be admir'd for their ſublime Style, than for that ſweetneſs and ſimplicity, which is inherent in them.

Rapin tells us, That *Horace* in his *Odes* found the Art to joyn all the force and high Flights of *Pindar*, to all the ſweetneſs and delicacy of *Anacreon*, to make himſelf a new Character, by uniting the perfections of the other Two. For beſides that he had a *Wit* naturally pleaſant, it was alſo great, ſolid, and ſublime; he had nobleneſs in his Conceits, and delicacy in his Thoughts and Sentiments: The parts of his *Odes* that he was willing to finiſh, are always *Maſter-pieces*; but (ſays *Rapin*) it requires a very clear apprehenſion to diſcern all his Wit; for there are many *Secret Graces*, and hidden Beauties in his Verſe, that very few can diſcover; *He* alſo is the only *Latin* Author who writ well in *that* Verſe amongſt the *Ancients*; and none could ever follow him, his *Genius* went ſo high. **Rap.** *Reflex.* on *Ariſtotle's* Treat. of *Poeſie*, *part* 2. *ſect.* 30.

Dryden ſays, That if we take *Horace* in parts, he is chiefly to be conſider'd in his Three different *Talents*, as he was a *Critick*, a *Satyriſt*, and a *Writer* of *Odes*. His *Morals* are uniform, and run through all of them; For let his *Dutch Commentators* ſay what they will, his Philoſophy was *Epicurean*; and he made uſe of *Gods* and *Providence*, only to ſerve a turn in *Poetry*. But (ſays *Dryden*) ſince neither his *Criticiſms*, (which are the moſt inſtructive of any that are written in this Art,) nor his *Satyrs*, (which are incomparably beyond *Juvenal's*, if to laugh and rally, is to be preferr'd to railing and declaiming,) are no part of my preſent undertaking, I confine my ſelf wholly to his *Odes*: Theſe are alſo of ſeveral ſorts; ſome of them are *Panegyrical*, others *Moral*, the reſt *Jovial*, or (if I may ſo call them) *Bacchanalian.*

Bacchanalian. As difficult as *Horace* makes it, and as indeed it is, to imitate *Pindar*, yet in his moſt elevated flights, and in the ſudden changes of his Subject, with almoſt imperceptible Connexions, that *Theban Poet* is his Maſter. But *Horace*, ſays *Dryden*, is of the more bounded Fancy, and confines himſelf ſtrictly to one ſort of Verſe, or *Stanza* in every *Ode*. That which will diſtinguiſh *his* Style from all other Poets, is the *Elegance* of his *Words*, and the *Numerouſneſs* of his *Verſe*; there is nothing ſo *delicately turn'd* in all the *Roman* Language. There appears (ſays *Dryden*) in every part of his *Diction*, or (to ſpeak *Engliſh*) in all his Expreſſions, a kind of noble and bold Purity. His Words are choſen with as much exactneſs as *Virgil's*; but there ſeems to be a greater *Spirit* in them. There is a ſecret Happineſs attends his Choice, which in *Petronius* is call'd *Curioſa Felicitas*, and which I ſuppoſe (ſays *Dryden*) he had from the *Feliciter audere* of *Horace* himſelf. But the moſt diſtinguiſhing part of all his Character, ſeems to be his Briskneſs, his Jolity, and his good Humour: And thoſe (ſays *Dryden*) I have chiefly endeavour'd to Copy; his other Excellencies, I confeſs, are above my Imitation. **Dryd.** *Pref.* to *Sylvæ*: Or, the 2*d* Part of *Poetical Miſcellanies*.

A late *Anonymous German* Author in his *Bibliograph. Curioſ. Hiſtor. Philologic. pag.* 46. remarks, That *Horace's* Book, *De Arte Poeticâ*, which really is no more than an *Epiſtle* to the Two *Piſo's*, is an Excellent Piece of *Criticiſm*, as well as his other *Epiſtles* and *Satyrs*; but yet, that it is not a Work ſo well finiſh'd, and perfected, as one might reaſonably have expected from the hand of ſo great a Maſter.

Gerardus Johannes Voſſius, in his *De Arte Poeticâ, cap.* 14. *ſect.* 1. ſays, That the *Oeconomy* which *Horace* hath obſerv'd

obſerv'd in his *De Arte Poeticâ* is not very regular, nor exact; *that* all that he minded, was to heap together a great many Rules and Precepts, without regarding their Order, or Method.

Rapin, in the *Advertiſement* before his *Reflexions* on *Ariſtotle*'s Treatiſe of *Poeſie*, obſerves to us, that *Horace*'s Piece *De Arte Poeticâ*, is no more than an Interpretation of *Ariſtotle's* Treatiſe of *Poeſie*; and that *Horace* was the firſt who propos'd this *great Model* to the *Romans*.

And in another place *Rapin* tells us, That *Horace*, who was the firſt Interpreter of *Ariſtotle*, in his Book *De Arte Poeticâ*, has obſerv'd as little Method as *Ariſtotle* did; becauſe (perhaps) it was writ in an *Epiſtle*, whoſe Character ought to be free, and without conſtraint. **Rap.** *Reflex.* &c. *part* 1. *ſect.* xvii.

Benjamin Johnſon.

THis *Renowned Poet* was born in the City of *Weſtminſter*, his Mother living in *Harts-Horn-Lane*, near *Charing-Croſs*, where ſhe Married a *Bricklayer* for her Second Husband. But tho' he ſprang from mean Parents, yet his admirable Parts have made him more famous, than thoſe of a more conſpicuous Extraction. Nor do I think it any diminution to him, That he was Son-in-Law to a *Bricklayer*, and work'd at that Trade; ſince if we take a ſurvey of the Records of Antiquity, we ſhall find the *greateſt Poets* of the *meaneſt Birth*, and moſt liable to the Inconveniencies of Life. Witneſs *Homer*,

Homer, who begg'd from door to door; *Euripides*, traded in Herbs with his Mother; *Plautus* was forc'd to ſerve a Baker; *Nævius* was a Captain's Man; *Terence* was a Slave to the generous *Lucan*; *Virgil*, was the Son of a Basket-Maker: And yet theſe thought the obſcurity of their Extraction no diminution to their Worth; Nor will any Man of Senſe reflect on *Ben. Johnſon* on this account, if he ſeriouſly call to mind that ſaying of *Juvenal* in his Eighth Satyr:

——*Nobilitas ſola eſt, atque unica Virtus.*

He was firſt bred at a Private School, in St. *Martin's* Church, then plac'd at *Weſtminſter*, under the famous Mr. *Cambden*, (to whom in gratitude he dedicated his fourteenth *Epigram*) afterwards he was ſent to St. *John's* Colledge in *Cambridge*; from thence he remov'd to *Oxford*, and was enter'd of *Chriſt-Church* Colledge; where in the Year 1619. (as Mr. *Wood* ſays) he took his Maſter of Arts Degree: Tho' Dr. *Fuller* ſays, He continued there but few Weeks, for want of Maintenance, being fain to return to the Trade of his Father-in-Law; where he aſſiſted in the New Building of *Lincolne's Inn*, with a Trowel in his Hand, and a Book in his Pocket. But this *Engliſh Maro*, was not long before he found a *Mæcenas* and a *Varus*, to free him from ſo ſlaviſh an Employment, and furniſh him with Means to enjoy his *Muſe at liberty*, in private. 'Twas then that he writ his Excellent Plays, and grew into Reputation with the moſt Eminent of our *Nobility*, and *Gentry*. 'Twas then, that *Carthwright*, *Randolph*, and others of both *Univerſities*, ſought his *Adoption*; and gloried more in his Friendſhip, and the Title of his *Sons*, than in their own well-deſerv'd Characters. Neither did he leſs love, or

was leſs belov'd by the Famous *Poets* of his Time, *Shakeſpear*, *Beaumont*, and *Fletcher.*

He was generally eſteem'd a Man of a very free Temper, and withal Blunt, and ſomewhat haughty to thoſe, that were either Rivals in Fame, or Enemies to his Writings, (witneſs his *Poetaſter*, wherein he falls upon *Decker*, and his anſwer to Dr. *Gill*, who writ againſt his *Magnetick Lady*,) otherwiſe of a good ſociable Humour, when amongſt his *Sons* and *Friends* in the *Apollo.*

He has writ Fifty Plays in all, whereof Fifteen are *Comedies*, Three are *Tragedies*, the reſt are *Maſques* and Entertainments: And beſides theſe, (for he is not wholly *Dramatick*,) there are his *Underwoods*, *Epigrams*, *&c.*

Winſtanley, in *The Lives of the moſt Famous Engliſh Poets*, ſays, That *Ben. Johnſon* was paramount in the *Dramatick* part of *Poetry*, and taught the Stage an exact conformity to the Laws of *Comedians*, being accounted the moſt Learned, Judicious, and Correct of all the *Engliſh Poets*; and the more to be admir'd for being ſo, for that neither the height of Natural Parts, for he was no *Shakeſpear*; nor the Coſt of extraordinary Education, but his own proper Induſtry, and Application to Books, advanc'd him to this perfection.

He likewiſe *tells* us, That *Johnſon's* Plays were above the Vulgar Capacity, and took not ſo well at the *firſt Stroke*, as at the *rebound*, when beheld the ſecond time; yea, that they will endure Reading, and that with due Commendation, ſo long as either Ingenuity or Learning are faſhionable in our Nation. And altho' all his *Plays* may endure the Teſt, yet in Three of his *Comedies*, namely, *The Fox*, *Alchymiſt*, and *Silent Woman*, he may be compar'd, in the Judgment of Learned Men, for

for *Decorum*, *Language*, and *Humour*, as well with the Chief of the *Ancient Greek* and *Latin Comedians*, as the Prime of *Modern Italians*, who have been judg'd the beſt of *Europe* for a happy Vein in *Comedies*; Nor is his *Bartholomew-Fair* much ſhort of them. As for his other Comedies, *Staple of News*, *Devil's an Aſs*, and the reſt, if they be not (ſays *Winſtanley*) ſo ſprightful and vigorous as his *firſt Pieces*, all that are Old, *will*, and all that deſire to be Old, *ſhould* excuſe him therein; and therefore let the Name of *Ben. Johnſon* ſhield them againſt whoever ſhall think fit to be ſevere in Cenſure againſt them. The truth is, ſays *Winſtanley*, his Tragedies, *Sejanus*, and *Cataline* ſeem to have in them more of an *Artificial* and *Inflate*, than of a *Pathetical* and *naturally Tragick Height*; yet do they far excel any of the *Engliſh* ones, that were writ before him; ſo that *He* may be truly ſaid, to be the *firſt Reformer* of the *Engliſh* Stage.

In the reſt of his *Poetry*, (for he is not wholly *Dramatick*,) as his *Underwoods*, *Epigrams*, &c. He is (ſays *this Author*) ſometimes bold and ſtrenuous, ſometimes Magiſterial, ſometimes lepid and full enough of Conceit, and ſometimes a Man as other Men are.

Dryden tells us, That if we look upon *Johnſon* while he was *himſelf*, (for his laſt Plays were but his Dotages,) he thinks him the moſt Learned and Judicious Writer which any Theatre ever had. He was a moſt ſevere Judge of himſelf as well as others. One cannot ſay he wanted Wit, but rather that he was frugal of it. In his Works you find little to retrench or alter. *Wit* and *Language*, and *Humour* alſo in ſome meaſure we had before him; but ſomething of *Art* was wanting to the *Drama* till he came. He manag'd his Strength to more advantage than any who preceeded

him. You ſeldom find him making love in any of his Scenes, or endeavouring to move the Paſſions; his *Genius* was too ſullen and Saturnine to do it gracefully, eſpecially when he knew he came after thoſe who had perform'd both to ſuch an height. *Humour* was his proper Sphere, and in that he delighted moſt to repreſent *Mechanick* People. He was deeply Converſant in the *Ancients*, both *Greek* and *Latin*, and he borrow'd boldly from them: There is ſcarce a *Poet* or *Hiſtorian* among the *Roman* Authors of thoſe times whom he has not Tranſlated in *Sejanus* and *Catiline*. But he has done his Robberies ſo openly, that one may ſee he fears not to be taxed by any Law. He invades Authors like a Monarch, and what would be Theft in other Poets, is only Victory in him. With the Spoils of theſe Writers he ſo repreſents *Old Rome* to us, in its Rites, Ceremonies and Cuſtoms, that if one of *their* Poets had written *either* of his *Tragedies*, we had ſeen leſs of it than in *him*. If there was any fault in his *Language*, 'twas that he weav'd it too cloſely and laborioufly, in his *Comedies* eſpecially: Perhaps too, he did a little too much *Romanize* our Tongue, leaving the Words which he Tranſlated almoſt as much *Latin* as he found them: Wherein tho' he learnedly followed *their* Language, he did not enough comply with the Idiom of *Ours*. If (ſays *Dryden*) I would compare *him* with *Shakeſpear*, I muſt acknowledge *him* the more correct Poet, but *Shakeſpear* the greater Wit. *Shakeſpear* was the *Homer*, or Father of our *Dramatick* Poets; *Johnſon* was the *Virgil*, the pattern of Elaborate Writing; I admire *him*, ſays *Dryden*, but I love *Shakeſpear*. To conclude, as *he* has given us the moſt Correct Plays, ſo in the precepts which he has laid down in his Diſcoveries, We have as many and profitable Rules for perfecting the Stage, as

any

any wherewith the *French* can furniſh us. **Dryd.** *Eſſay* of *Dramatick Poeſie. pag.* 34, 35.

Dryden, in his *Poſtſcript* to *Granada*, calls *Ben Johnſon*, *The moſt Judicious of Poets* and *Inimitable Writer*, yet, he ſays, his Excellency lay in the low Characters of Vice, and Folly. When at any time (ſays he) *Ben.* aim'd at Wit in the ſtricter Senſe, that is ſharpneſs of Conceit, he was forc'd to borrow from the *Ancients*, (as to my knowledge he did very much from *Plautus*:) Or When he truſted himſelf alone, often fell into meanneſs of Expreſſion. Nay, he was not free from the loweſt and moſt groveling kind of *Wit*, which we call *Clenches*: Of which *every Man in his Humour* is infinitely full, and which is worſe, the Wittieſt Perſons in the *Drama* ſpeak them.

Dryden, in another place, allows, That *Ben. Johnſon* is to be admir'd for many Excellencies; and can be tax'd with fewer failings, than any *Engliſh Poet*. I know, ſays *Dryden*, I have been accus'd as an Enemy of his Writings; but without any other Reaſon, than that I do not admire him blindly, and without looking into his Imperfections. For why ſhould *he* only be exempted from thoſe frailties, from which *Homer* and *Virgil* are not free? Or, why ſhould there be any *Ipſe dixit* in our *Poetry*, any more than there is in our *Philoſophy*. I admire and applaud him (ſays *Dryden*) where I ought: Thoſe who do more, do but value themſelves in their admiration of him; and by telling you they extol *Ben. Johnſon*'s way, would inſinuate to you, that they can practiſe it. For my part, ſays *Dryden*, I declare that I want Judgment to imitate him: And ſhould think it a great impudence in my ſelf to attempt it. To make Men appear pleaſantly ridiculous on the Stage, was, as I have ſaid, his Talent: And in this he needed not the *Acumen* of *Wit*, but that of *Judgment*.

For

For the Characters and Representations of Folly are only the effects of Observation; and Observation is an effect of Judgment. Some Ingenious Men, for whom (says *Dryden*) I have a particular esteem, have thought I have much injur'd *Ben. Johnson*, when I have not allow'd his *Wit* to be extraordinary: But they confound the Notion of what is *Witty*, with what is *pleasant*. That *Ben. Johnson*'s Plays were *pleasant*, he must want reason who denies: But that *pleasantness* (says *Dryden*) was not properly *Wit*, or the sharpness of Conceit; but the natural imitation of Folly: Which I confess to be excellent in its Kind, but not to be of that kind which they pretend. Yet if we will believe *Quintilian*, in his Chapter *De Movendo Risu*, he gives his Opinion of *Both* in these following Words, *Stulta reprehendere facillimum est; nam per se sunt ridicula: & à derisu non procul abest risus: Sed rem Urbanam facit aliqua ex nobis adjectio.* **Dryd.** *Pref. to the* Mock-Astrologer.

Shadwell, in his Dedication before the *Vertuoso*, says, That *Johnson* was incomparably the best *Dramatick Poet* that ever was, or, he believes, ever will be; and that he had rather be Author of one Scene in his best *Comedies*, than of any Play this Age has produc'd.

Notwithstanding the general Vogue of *Ben. Johnson*, yet we finde a most severe *Satyr* against his *Magnetick Lady*, Writ by Dr. *Gill*, Master of *Pauls* School, or at least his *Son*: Part of which I shall take the pains to Transcribe:

But to advise thee Ben, *in this strict Age,*
A Brick-hill's better for thee than a Stage.
Thou better know'st a Groundsill for to lay,
Than lay the Plot, or Ground-work of a Play,

And

And better can'st direct to Cap a Chimney,
Than to converse with Clio, *or* Polyhimny.
Fall then to work in thy Old Age again,
Take up thy Trug and Trowel, gentle Ben,
Let Plays alone; or if thou needs will Write,
And thrust thy feeble Muse *into the Light;*
Let Lowen *cease, and* Taylor *scorn to touch*
The loathed Stage, for thou *hast made it such.*

Ben. Johnson's Answer to the said Verses.

Shall the prosperity of a Pardon still
Secure thy railing Rhymes, *Infamous* Gill,
At Libelling? Shall no Star-Chamber *Peers,*
Pillory, nor Whip, nor want of Ears,
All which thou hast incurr'd deservedly:
Nor degradation from the Ministry,
To be the Denis *of thy Father's School,*
Keep in thy bawling Wit, thou bawling Fool.
Thinking to stir me, thou hast lost thy end,
I'll Laugh at thee poor wretched Tike, go send
Thy Blotant Muse abroad, and teach it rather
A Tune to drown the Ballads of thy Father:
For thou hast nought to cure his Fame,
But Tune and Noise the Eccho of his Shame.
A Rogue by Statute, censur'd to be Whipt,
Cropt, branded, slipt, neck-stockt; go, you are stript.

The haughty Humour of *Johnson* was blam'd, and Carpt at by several, but by none more Ingeniously, than by Sir *John Suckling*, who arraign'd him at the *Sessions* of *Poets* in this manner:

The

Th' first that broke silence was good Old Ben,
Prepar'd before with Canary *Wine;*
And he told them plainly that he deserv'd the Bays,
For his *were call'd* Works, *where* others *were but* Plays;
And,
Bid them remember how he had purg'd the Stage
Of Errors that had lasted many an Age:
And he hop'd they did not think, the Silent Woman,
The Fox, *and the* Alchymist, *out done by no Man.*

Apollo *stopt him there, and bid him not go on,*
'Twas Merit, *he said, and not* Presumption
Must carry't; at which Ben. *turn'd about,*
And in great choller offer'd to go out:
But,
Those that were there, thought it not fit
To discontent so Ancient a Wit;
And therefore Apollo *call'd him back agen,*
And made him mine Host *of his own* New-Inn.

Ben. Johnson died *Anno Dom.* 1637. in the Sixty Third Year of his Age, and was buried in St. *Peters* Church in *Westminster*, on the West-side near the *Belfry*; having only a plain Stone over his *Grave*, with this *Inscription*,

O Rare BEN. JOHNSON.

Decius

Decius Junius Juvenalis,

A Most Elegant *Latin Satyrist*, (as appears by his *Sxteen Satyrs*, which are Extant,) born at *Aquinum* in the Kingdom of *Naples*; He flouriſh'd in the time of the Emperour *Domitian*; who for Reflecting upon *Paris*, a Comedian and Favourite, was in the Eightieth Year of his Age ſent Captain of a Company into *Egypt*, whence he is call'd by *Sidonius Apollinaris*, *Irati Hiſtrionis Exul.*

Ammianus Marcellinus, *lib.* 28. *Hiſtor.* ſays, That in his time *Juvenal* was ſo much in Vogue, that even ſome who did deteſt Learning, did notwithſtanding in their moſt profound retiredneſs, diligently employ themſelves in Reading his Works.

To omit *Suidas*, and ſome others of the *Ancients*, which mention him, *Porphyrio* the Commentator on *Horace*, confeſſes that *Horace* had excell'd, had not *Juvenal* writ.

Lipſius, *Cent.* 11. *Miſcell. Epiſt.* 62. reckons *Juvenal* amongſt the moſt uſeful ſort of Writers.

And again, *lib.* iv. *Epiſtolic. Quæſtion. Epiſt.* 15. *Lipſius* tells us, That never any *Satyriſt* excell'd *Juvenal* in correcting the ill Manners of Men.

Conradus Ritterſhuſius, *lib.* 1. *Lect. Sacr. cap.* x. ſays, That *Juvenal* is ſo full of his Divine, Grave Sentences, that he may very properly be call'd, *The Prophet of the Latin Poets.*

Joſeph Scaliger, in his *Scaligerana* 1. *pag.* 95. aſſures us, That *Juvenal* is an Excellent Poet, and that he has a great many fine Things; *that* his *Satyrs* are truly

Tragical; but I cannot but wonder, ſays *Scaliger*, why he ſhould ſay, that he wrote in the Style of *Lucilius*, ſince never any thing was more unlike either *that*, or *Horace*'s Style.

Farnaby, in the *Epiſtle Dedicatory* to the *Prince* of *Wales*, before his Tranſlation of *Juvenal*, ſays, That many preferr'd *Juvenal*'s *Satyrs* before all the *Morals* of *Ariſtotle*, nay, and that they thought them equal to *thoſe* of *Seneca*, and *Epictetus*.

He likewiſe *informs* us, There are ſeveral *Criticks*, who give the precedence to *Juvenal* before *Horace*; eſteeming the *latter* but as a ſlight, ſuperficial *Satyriſt*, who only laught from the teeth outwards; whereas *Juvenal* bit to the very bone, and did not often ſuffer his *Prey* to eſcape without ſtrangling, and being put to Death.

Sir *Robert Stapleton*, in the Preface to his *Tranſlation* of *Juvenal*, remarks, That this Author is commended by Learned Men for the beſt *Satyriſt*; whence he is ſtyled, *That Cenſor Morum Liberrimus*. He is alſo a rare *Poet*, as is teſtified by his *Verſe*, flowing like a River, when the Wind breaths gently, ſmooth near the Banks, ſtrong in the Current. *He* was a true *Philoſopher*, who with inimitable ſweetneſs of Language, and Majeſty of Sentences, ſets before our Eyes (ſays *Stapleton*) the *lovelineſs* of *Vertue*, and the *deformity* of *Vice*.

Julius Scaliger, *lib.* 6. *De Poeticâ*, calls *Horace* a Scoffer, his Speech Vulgar, his Verſe negligent, only his *Latin* pure. But *Juvenal*, ſays he, *ardet*, *inſtat*, *apertè jugulat*; his Purity is *Roman*, his Compoſure happy, his Verſe better, his Sentences ſharper, his Phraſe more open, and his Satyr more accurate. *Horace*, ſays he, did not more exceed *Lucilius*, than *Juvenal Horace*; whether we reſpect the variety of Arguments, the dexterity

dexterity of Handling, the plenty of Invention, the frequency of Sentences, the sharpness of Reprehension, as also his Raillery, and good Manners. *pag.* 838, and 872.

Barten Holyday, in the *Pref.* to his Translation of *Juvenal*, observes, That in the same Arguments *Juvenal* never came short of *Horace*, but often out-went him; that *Juvenal*'s Eighth *Satyr* of *True Nobility*, is far more excellent, than, of the same Argument, *Horace*'s Sixth. Compare, says he, *Juvenal*'s Tenth with *Horace*'s First, of *The Desires of Men*, (let *Julius Scaliger* speak the Close in his own Words,) *Sanè ille tibi* Juvenalis *Poeta videbitur, hic* Horatius *jejunæ cujuspiam Theseos tenuis tentator*; surely thou wilt acknowledge *Juvenal* to be a *Poet*, but *Horace* to be some poor *Theme-Maker*. *Lipsius* readily approves of this Opinion, saying of *Scaliger*, *Ille, me judice, inter multa certi & elegantis judicii, nihil verius protulit*; preferring *Juvenal* before *Horace*, for his Ardor, his Loftiness, and his Freedom. And for my own part, says *Holyday*, tho' I willingly admire the happiness of *Horace* in his *Lyricks*, yet I cannot but think he very much untun'd himself in his fall from the *Ode* to the *Satyr*. Besides, *Juvenal*'s Change of the *Ancient Satyr*, was, methinks, not only a *Change*, but a *Perfection*. For, says *Holyday*, what is the End of *Satyr*, but to *Reform*? Whereas a perpetual *Grin* does rather *Anger* than *Mend*. Wherefore the *Old Satyr* and the *New*, and so *Horace* and *Juvenal*, may seem to differ as the *Jester* and the *Orator*, the Face of an *Ape* and of a *Man*, or as the *Fiddle* and *Thunder*.

Juvenal, says *Dryden*, is of a more Vigorous and Masculine Wit, than *Horace*; he gives me as much pleasure as I can bear: He fully satisfies my Expectation, he treats his Subject home: His Spleen is rais'd, and he

raiſes mine: I have the Pleaſure of Concernment in all he ſays; He drives his Reader along with him; and when he is (ſays *Dryden*) at the end of his way, I willingly ſtop with him: If he went another Stage, it wou'd be too far, it would make a Journey of a Progreſs, and turn Delight into Fatigue. When he gives over, 'tis a ſign the Subject is exhauſted; and the Wit of Man can carry it no farther. If a Fault can be juſtly found in him, 'tis (ſays *Dryden*) that he is ſometimes too luxuriant, too redundant; ſays more than he needs, but never more than pleaſes. Add to this, that his Thoughts are as juſt as thoſe of *Horace*, and much more Elevated. His Expreſſions are Sonorous, and more Noble; his Verſe more Numerous, and his Words are ſuitable to his Thoughts; ſublime and lofty. All theſe contribute to the Pleaſure of the Reader, and the greater the Soul of him who Reads, his Tranſports are the greater. *Horace*, ſays *Dryden*, is always on the *Amble*, *Juvenal* on the *Gallop*: But his way is perpetually on Carpet-Ground. He goes with more Impetuoſity than *Horace*; but as ſecurely; and the ſwiftneſs adds a more lively agitation to the Spirits.——The Sauce of *Juvenal* is more poignant to create in us an Appetite of Reading him. The Meat of *Horace* is more nouriſhing; but the Cookery of *Juvenal* more exquiſite; ſo that, granting *Horace* to be the more general *Philoſopher*; we cannot deny, that *Juvenal* was the greater Poet, I mean in *Satyr*. His Thoughts, ſays *Dryden*, are ſharper, his Indignation againſt Vice is more vehement; his Spirit has more of the Commonwealth Genius; he treats *Tyranny*, and all the Vices attending it, as they deſerve, with the utmoſt rigour: And conſequently, a Noble Soul is better pleas'd with a zealous Vindicator of *Roman* liber-

ty;

ty; than with a Temporizing Poet, a well Manner'd Court Slave, and a Man who is often afraid of laughing in the right place: Who is ever decent, because he is naturally servile. After all, says *Dryden*, *Horace* had the disadvantage of the Times in which he liv'd; they were better for the *Man*, but worse for the *Satyrist*. 'Tis generally said, that those Enormous Vices, which were practis'd under the Reign of *Domitian*, were unknown in the time of *Augustus Cæsar*. That therefore *Juvenal* had a larger Field, than *Horace*. Dryd. *Dedic.* before the *Translat.* of *Juvenal*, *pag.* 37, 38, 39.

Rapin observes, That the *Delicacy* which properly gives the relish to *Satyr*, was heretofore the Character of *Horace*, for that it was only by the way of *Jest* and Merriment that *he* exercis'd his *Censure*. For he knew full well, that the sporting of Wit, hath more effect than the strongest Reasons, and the most sententious Discourse, to render *Vice ridiculous*. In which *Juvenal*, says *Rapin*, with all his seriousness, has so much ado to succeed. For indeed that violent manner of Declamation, which throughout he makes use of, has, most commonly, as *Rapin* remarks, but very little Effect, he scarce perswades at all; because he is always in *choler*, and never speaks in *Cold Blood*. 'Tis true, says *Rapin*, he has some *Common Places* of *Morality*, that may serve to dazzle the weaker sort of Apprehensions: But with all his strong Expressions, *energetick* Terms, and great Flashes of Eloquence, he makes little impression; because he has nothing that is *delicate*, or that is *natural*. It is not a true Zeal, as *Rapin* observes, that makes *Juvenal* talk against the misdemeanors of that Age, 'tis meerly a Spirit of Vanity and Ostentation. Rap. *Reflex.* &c. *part* 2. *sect.* 28.

Lubin's

Lubin's Comments upon *Juvenal* and *Persius*, Printed *Hanoviæ*, 1603. are Inserted in the *Index Expurgatorius*, Publish'd at *Madrid*, *Anno Dom.* 1667.

Marcus Annæus Lucanus,

A Famous *Poet*, born at *Corduba*, a City in *Spain*, in the 37*th.* or, as others say, the 39*th.* Year of *Christ.* He was the Son of *Marcus Annæus Mella*, of *Corduba*, a *Roman* Knight; and Nephew to *Lucius Annæus Seneca*, the Philosopher. He was taken in the *Pisonian* Conspiracy, and put to Death by *Nero*, in the 26*th.* Year of his Age.

He Wrote the *History* of the *Civil Wars* between *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, in *Hexameter* Verse; the *Poem* is Entituled *Pharsalia*, wherein he is said, to have been assisted by his Wife *Polla Argentaria.*

There have been but few more expos'd to the Censure of *Criticks*, than this our Author. *Some* making him to be an Excellent *Poet*; *Others* an indifferent *Historian*; *Some* a furious *Orator*; and *Others* a *Philosopher*, a *Mathematician*, and a *Divine.*

Quintilian, lib. x. *cap.* 1. observes, That *Lucan* has a great deal of Heat and Fire; and that he is very remarkable for his Sentences; but, *says he*, to speak my mind freely, he is rather to be number'd amongst *Orators* than *Poets.*

Servius, in his Comment upon *Virgil's* First Book of his *Æneids*, Verse 281. is also of the Opinion, that *Lucan* did

did not deſerve to be reckon'd among the *Poets*, becauſe he ſeems to have Writ rather a *Hiſtory* than a *Poem.*

And *Johannes Sarisberienſis*, *lib.* 2. *Policratici*, *cap.* xix. calls *Lucan* a moſt learned *Poet*; if, *ſays he*, it be proper to call him a *Poet*, who, by his truly Relating Matters of Fact, appears to be more of the *Hiſtorian.*

But we find *Martial* took *Lucan* to be not only a *Poet*, but a very good one too; according to that *Epigram* of his, *lib.* 14. *Epig.* 194.

Sunt Quidam, qui me dicunt non eſſe Poetam:
Sed qui me vendit, Bibliopola, *putat.*

And *Julius Scaliger*, *lib.* 1. *Poetices*, *cap.* 11. ſays, It is beyond all diſpute, that *Lucan* was a *Poet*; and that the *Grammarians* do but trifle, (as they commonly do) when they object, and ſay, That he wrote not a *Poem* but a *Hiſtory.*

Nicolaus Clemangius, *Epiſt.* v. tells us, That *Lucan* gave an excellent Deſcription of the *Civil Wars*; and that he was very well skill'd both in *Aſtronomy* and *Philoſophy.*

Philippus Rubenicus, *lib.* 2. *Electorum*, *cap.* 5. ſays, He Loves *Lucan* for having ſo great a Soul; who, though he liv'd in times of Slavery and Tyranny, yet ſcorn'd to ſhew any thing that was either Mean, or Servile.

Caſper Barthius, *lib.* 53. *Adverſar. cap.* 6. informs us, That *Lucan* is a *Poet* of a great *Genius*, of extraordinary Learning, and of a true *Heroick* Character; who, from the very time he liv'd, has always been eſteem'd a moſt Conſiderable Author, eſpecially among *Philoſophers*, by Reaſon of his gravity, his force, his acuteneſs, and his weighty Sentences, which ſhine, and are traſparent through

through the whole Work; ſo that he has ſcarce ever had his equal in that Kind.

But notwithſtanding *Barthius* has given this high Character of *Lucan*, yet in another place, *viz. lib.* 60. *Adverſ. cap.* v. he ſhews us, That his good Qualities have been ballanc'd by his great imperfections: Thus, *he ſays, Lucan* was a mortal Enemy to *Cæſar*, and his Family; and that under pretence of ſpeaking for *Liberty*, he had no other deſign, than to eſtabliſh the Paſſion and Ambition of ſome few particular Perſons of his Time, who had a mind to get the Government ſolely into their own hands; or, ſince they could not bear any longer with their Lawful Prince, were rather diſpoſed to ſubmit themſelves to any other whatſoever, than to *Cæſar*; who, by overthrowing the Commonwealth, had taken away all their *Liberties*, only to inveſt himſelf with an Abſolute, *Deſpotick* Power.

He alſo further declares, That *Lucan* was a raſh, giddy-headed Young Fellow, and that he Writ without any thing of Judgement; *that* he knew not how to manage the Characters of thoſe, whom he repreſented; but that he generally gave them his own vain, idle, and furious Character.

But this great *Freedom* us'd by *Lucan*, and which *Barthius* takes to be the effect of his want of Judgement, the Learned *Daniel Heinſius*, in his Book *De laude Aſini, pag.* 86,87. interprets quite otherwiſe, for he ſuppoſes, and believes, it proceeded from a true *Roman* Spirit, and that it had no other cauſe, but his own Noble and Generous Temper.

Monſieur *Godeau*, in his *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, and towards the end of the *Firſt Century*, ſays, That *Lucan* had without doubt a great *Genius*, and a high and lofty Spirit, as particularly appears in his *Deſcriptions*; but

that

that he had the ordinary Vice of Young Men, which is, not to know how to govern himſelf.

He alſo adds, That as *ſome* have too great an eſteem for him, ſo *Others* blame him more than he deſerves; for that as he has his Vices, ſo it cannot be deny'd, but he has his Vertues too.

Julius Scaliger, lib. 6. De Poetica, pag. 844. remarks, That there are ſome, who have the confidence to compare *Lucan* with *Virgil*; but theſe, ſays he, inſtead of Magnifying *Lucan*, do but expoſe themſelves.

We confeſs, ſays *Scaliger*, That *Lucan* was one of a vaſt *Genius*; but at the ſame time we muſt acknowledge that he would often go beyond the bounds of *Poetry*; *that* he had an ungovernable Temper, and would now and then ſally out moſt extravagantly; and to conclude, *that* he had too much heat and fire in him, wanting that admirable and Divine Temper, which none ever had but *Virgil* only. And therefore, ſays *Scaliger*, though I may be thought to uſe too great a freedom, *Lucan* rather ſeems to *Bark* than *Sing*, in my Opinion.

And in another place of the ſame Book, *viz. pag.* 717. *Scaliger* obſerves, That *Lucan* was too much embaraſs'd, and confus'd in his Thoughts, and that he was often running from one Extream to another.

Lilius Gyraldus, in his fourth Dialogue, *De Poetis Antiquis*, affirms the very ſame thing of *Lucan*, that *M. Tullius* did of the *Corduban* Poets of his time, who, as he thought, had ſomewhat in them, that was extreamly odd and uncouth. And therefore, as *Gyraldus* obſerves, One very ingeniouſly compar'd *Lucan*, to a Horſe that was not broke, which would ever and anon be running in the midſt of ſome Meadow, or Field, leaping, and

kicking up his heels, but without any manner of Order, or Art.

Others, ſays *Gyraldus*, compar'd him to a Brisk, Active Souldier, who would fling his dart with a vaſt deal of ſtrength, though at the ſame time, he ne'er conſider'd to take any aim.

Joſeph Scaliger, in his firſt Book, *Epiſt.* 3. ſays, That if one looks narrowly into *Lucan*, he will find him to be a Man of no skill in *Aſtronomy*; and that he was a light, trifling, vain-glorious young Man.

Borrichius, in his *Diſſertat. Acad. de Poetis*, *pag.* 58. remarks, That *Lucan*'s *Pharſalia*, is of a Maſculine Style, too much ſet out with Sentences, and Political Inſtructions, but that now and then it was ſomewhat rough and uneven; nay, and ſometimes haughty, and affected. *Borrichius* can by no means approve of *Scaliger*'s Cenſure, *viz.* That *Lucan* ſeems rather to *Bark* than *Sing*; but is of Opinion, That had he not been cut off ſo ſoon, he would moſt certainly have poliſh'd this new Work of his.

Petronius (ſays *Rapin*, in his *Advertiſement* before his *Reflexions* on *Poeſie*) is diſguſted with the Stile of *Seneca* and *Lucan*, which to him ſeem'd affected, and contrary to the Principles of *Ariſtotle*. 'Tis at *them* he levels with thoſe glances, that ſlip from him againſt the *Poetaſters*, and falſe *Declamators*.

Philippus Brietius, in his Second Book, *De Poetis Latinis*, tells us, That *Lucan* affected to ſpeak nothing, but what was very great, and extraordinary; and hence it is, that his Style is ſo very lofty, irregular, and obſcure.

He alſo adviſes *Maſters* not to ſuffer their *Scholars* to read *Lucan*; for that, in his Opinion, never any Poet had ſo dangerouſly corrupted *Poetry*.

Rapin

Rapin says, That *Lucan* often in his *Pharsalia* grows flat for want of Wit. Rap. *Reflex.* on *Arist.* of *Poesie*, *part* 1. *sect.* 2.

He also observes, That the *Episodes* of *Lucan*, who makes long *Scholastick* Dissertations, and Disputes meerly *Speculative*, on things that fall in his way, shew much of Constraint and affectation. *Ibid. part* 2. *sect.* 8.

And, to conclude, *he tells* us, That *Lucan* is great and sublime, but as little Judgment. *Ibid. sect.* 15.

Dryden remarks, That *Lucan* follow'd too much the truth of History; crowded Sentences together; was too full of Points; and too often offer'd at somewhat which had more of the Sting of an *Epigram*, than of the dignity and state of an *Heroick Poem*. *Lucan*, says *Dryden*, us'd not much the help of his *Heathen Deities*: There was neither the Ministery of the Gods, nor the precipitation of the Soul, nor the fury of a Prophet, in his *Pharsalia*: He treats you more like a *Philosopher*, than a *Poet*: and instructs you in *Verse*, with what he had been taught by his Uncle *Seneca* in *Prose*. In one Word, says *Dryden*, he walks soberly a foot, when he might fly: Yet *Lucan* is not always this Religious Historian. The Oracle of *Appius*, and the Witchcraft of *Erictho* will somewhat atone for him, who was, indeed, bound up by an ill-chosen and known Argument, to follow Truth with great Exactness. Dryd. Essay of *Heroick Plays*.

Dryden, also in his *Apology* for *Heroick Poetry*, observes, That *Lucan* and *Statius* were Men of an unbounded Imagination, but that they often wanted the Poize of Judgment:

And in his *Dedication* before *Juvenal*, he says, That *Lucan* is wanting both in *Design* and *Subject*, and is besides too full of Heat, and Affectation, *pag.* viii.

Caius Lucilius,

A *Roman* Poet, of the *Equestrian* Order, the first that writ *Satyrs* in *Latin*, the great Uncle of *Pompey*, born at *Aurunca*, a Town in *Italy*. He was a Souldier under *Scipio Africanus*, when he besieg'd *Numantia* in *Spain*; He died at *Naples*, in the Forty Sixth Year of his Age.

That *Lucilius* was the first who writ *Satyr* amongst the *Romans*, appears by these following Verses of *Boileau*, in his *Art* of *Poetry*, thus render'd into *English*:

> Lucilius *was the Man who, bravely bold,*
> *To* Roman *Vices did this* Mirror *hold,*
> *Protected humble Goodness from reproach,*
> *Show'd Worth on Foot and Rascals in the Coach:*
> Horace *his pleasing Wit to this did add,*
> *And none uncensur'd could be* Fool, *or* Mad;
> *Unhappy was that Wretch, whose name might be*
> *Squar'd to the Rules of* their *Sharp Poetry.*
>
> **Boileau** of *Satyr*, in his *Art* of *Poetry.*

Horace, *lib.* 1. *Satyr* iv. says, That *Lucilius* design'd to imitate the Ancient *Greek Comedians*, who reflected upon Persons nakedly, without any Art or Disguise; and that among others he had follow'd *Eupolis*, *Cratinus*, and *Aristophanes*, not making any other alteration, than changing the Feet, and Measure of their Verse. *He adds*, that *Lucilius* is very pleasant and agreeable, and one of a very good Taste; but that his Verse was rough, and wanted the file. *He* also *tells* us, that *Lucilius*

cilius would commonly make two Hundred Verſes in an hours time, ſtanding all the while upon one Leg, which was a thing very extraordinary; but that his Verſes had neither force, nor purity. To conclude, *he ſays*, that *Lucilius* was a Man full of Words, and that he could not endure to take much pains.

But notwithſtanding this Character of *Horace*, we ſee *Quintilian*, *lib.* x. *cap.* 1. tells us, That *Lucilius* was the firſt amongſt the *Romans*, who had got any Reputation for writing *Satyr*; and that he was arriv'd to ſo great Credit, and ſuch a Fame, That there are Many, who prefer him before all other *Poets* in general. But, ſays *Quintilian*, I differ as much from *Them*, as I do from *Horace*, who compares *Lucilius* to a River, which carries with it a great deal of Filth and Mud, but yet has ſomewhat that is good in it. For ſays *Quintilian*, there is in *Lucilius* Wonderful Learning, great Freedom, and abundance of Wit.

Tully calls *Lucilius*, The chief of the *Latin Satyriſts*, a Learned Man, and a very Ingenious Perſon, of a Sharp Wit, one of an Excellent Life himſelf, and a Stinging Accuſer of the Villanies of Others.

Juvenal, in his firſt *Satyr* obſerves, That *Lucilius* us'd to write with ſo much ſharpneſs and freedom, that all the lewd, diſſolute Perſons of thoſe Times, were afraid of him: Which *Dryden* has thus tranſlated into *Engliſh* Verſe:

But when Lucilius *brandiſhes his Pen,*
And flaſhes in the face of Guilty Men,
A cold Sweat ſtands in drops on ev'ry part;
And Rage ſucceeds to Tears, Revenge to Smart.

Aulus

Aulus Gellius, lib. 18. *cap.* v. *Noctium Atticarum*, ſays, That *Lucilius* was incomparably well skill'd in the *Latin* Tongue.

Turnebus, in the nineteenth Book of his *Adverſaria, cap.* vi. remarks, That *Lucilius* in his *Satyrs*, did ſometimes fall into the *Iambick.*

And in the 28*th* Book, *cap.* ix. *Turnebus* obſerves to us, That though *Lucilius*'s Verſes are not to be compar'd to thoſe of other *Poets*; yet they have ſomewhat in them, which is both pleaſant and entertaining.

Lilius Gyraldus tells us, There were ſome who blam'd *Lucilius*, for mixing *Greek* with his *Latin*, juſt as *Pytholeon Rhodius* did in his *Epigrams*, who, for that reaſon, was laught at by *Horace.* But, ſays *Gyraldus*, I am ſure *Catullus* (and I could name others) did the ſame thing.

Gerardus Johannes Voſſius, lib. v. *Inſtitutionum Oratoriarum, pag.* 315. ſays, That of all the *Latin* Poets, *Lucilius* was obſerv'd to have made the greateſt uſe of the Figure *Tmeſis*, according to that *Diſtich* of *Auſonius:*

Reſciſſo diſces componere nomine Verſum:
Lucilii *vatis ſic imitator eris.*
Auſon. Epiſt. 5.

Dryden remarks, That tho' *Horace* ſeems to have made *Lucilius* the firſt Author of *Satyr* in Verſe, amongſt the *Romans*; He is only thus to be underſtood, That *Lucilius* had given a more *graceful turn* to the *Satyr* of *Ennius* and *Pacuvius*; not that *he* invented a new *Satyr* of his own.—And, as *Dryden* obſerves, the *Roman* Language was grown more refin'd, and by conſequence

ſequence more capable of receiving the *Grecian* Beauties in *Lucilius*'s Time; and therefore well might *He* write better than either *Ennius* or *Pacuvius.* **Dryd.** *Dedic.* before *Juvenal, pag.* 25, 26.

Titus Lucretius Carus,

BOth a *Latin* Poet, and a Philoſopher; He was born in the Second Year of the 171. *Olympiad*, 93 Years before *Chriſt.* According to *Euſebius*, he kill'd himſelf in the Forty Fourth Year of his Age, his *Miſtreſs* having given him a *Love-Potion*, which made him run mad: Though *Others* tell us, he died in his Twenty Sixth Year, and believe his madneſs, proceeded from the Cares and Melancholy that oppreſt him after the Baniſhment of his beloved *Memmius.*

The only *Remains* this great Wit hath left us, are his Six Books, *De Rerum Natura*; being an exact *Syſtem* of the *Epicurean* Philoſophy. *Euſebius* affirms, That *Lucretius* wrote theſe Books in his *Lucid Intervals*, when the Strength of Nature had thrown off all the diſturbing Particles, and his Mind (as 'tis obſerv'd of Mad Men) was Sprightly and Vigorous: Then in a *Poetical Rapture* he could fly with his *Epicurus* beyond the flaming limits of this World, frame and diſſolve Seas and Heavens in an inſtant, and by ſome unuſual Sallys, be the ſtrongeſt Argument of his own Opinion; for it ſeems impoſſible, ſays *Creech*, that ſome things which he delivers, ſhould proceed from *Reaſon* and *Judgment*, or any Cauſe but Chance, and unthinking Fortune.

Ovid

Ovid, speaking of *Lucretius*, gives him a very high Character, presaging that his Verses would continue as long as the World endur'd:

Carmina Sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucretî,
Exitio Terras cum dabit una dies.
Ovid. *Amor. lib.* 1. *Eleg.* 15.

Although *Cicero*, in his Second Book, *Epist.* x. to his Brother *Quintus*, Confirms his Brothers Opinion, That the *Poem* of *Lucretius* was not much set forth, or adorn'd with *Wit*; yet at the same time he owns, that *Lucretius* has therein shew'd a great deal of *Art*.

Julius Scaliger, in his Comment upon *Aristotle's Historia Animalium*, *cap.* 10. calls *Lucretius*, a Divine Person, and an Incomparable *Poet*.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. *pag.* 104. says, That *Lucretius* is a good Book; that there is not a better Author in the *Latin* Tongue; and that *Virgil* has taken many things from him.

Gaspar Scioppius, in his *De Arte Criticâ*, *pag.* 93. declares, he is of *Lambinus*'s Opinion, That never any Man spoke *Latin* to a greater Perfection; and that neither *Tully*, nor *Cæsar*, Wrote with a purer Style than *Lucretius*.

Aulus Gellius, *lib.* 1. *cap.* 21. *Noct. Attic.* styles *Lucretius*, a *Poet* that excell'd both in Wit and Eloquence.

Vossius, in his *De Arte Grammaticâ*, *pag.* 797. calls *Lucretius*, The best of all the *Latin* Authors.

Monsieur *Bayle*, in the *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*, *Juillet* 1685. *pag.* 812. says, There appears so much Eloquence in the Verse of *Lucretius*, that had he liv'd in the time of *Augustus*, he might very well have disputed the Point with *Virgil*. But, as he observes,

Thirty

Thirty or Forty Years makes a mighty difference between two Authors. And yet for all that, there are ſome *Criticks*, who have plac'd *Lucretius* above all other *Latin* Authors. But this, ſays *Bayle*, is too much; 'tis enough to put him in the Liſt of good Authors.

Evelyn, in the *Preface* to his *Tranſlation* of the Firſt Book of *Lucretius*, obſerves to us, That in this Work of *Lucretius*, Nature her ſelf ſits Triumphant, wanting none of her juſt Equipage and Attendance; whileſt our *Carus* hath erected this everlaſting *Arch* to her Memory, ſo full of Ornament and exquſite Workmanſhip, as nothing of this kind hath ever either approach'd, or exceeded it.

Where the matter he takes in hand is capable of Form and Luſtre, he makes it (ſays *Evelyn*) even to out-ſhine the Sun it ſelf in ſplendor: And as he ſpares no coſt to deck and ſet it forth; ſo never had Man a more Rich and Luxurious Fancy, more Keen and Sagacious Inſtruments to ſquare the moſt ſtubborn and rude of *Materials*, into that ſpiring ſoftneſs you will every where find them diſpos'd, in this his Stupendious and well-built *Theatre of Nature.*

Dryden remarks, That if *Lucretius* was not of the beſt Age of *Roman Poetry*, he was at leaſt of that which preceded it; and he himſelf refin'd it to that degree of perfection, both in the Language and the Thoughts, that he left an eaſie Task to *Virgil*; who as he ſucceeded him in time, ſo he Copy'd his Excellencies: For the Method of the *Georgicks* is plainly deriv'd from him. *Lucretius* had choſen a Subject naturally crabbed; he therefore adorn'd it with *Poetical* Deſcriptions, and Precepts of Morality, in the beginning and ending of his Books. Which you ſee *Virgil* has imitated with great ſucceſs, in thoſe Four Books, which (ſays *Dryden*) in my Opinion, are more perfect in their Kind, than even his Divine

Æneids. The *turn* of his Verſe he has likewiſe follow'd, in thoſe Places which *Lucretius* has moſt Labour'd, and ſome of his very Lines he has Tranſplanted into his own Works, without much variation. If I am not miſtaken (ſays *Dryden*) the diſtinguiſhing Character of *Lucretius*, (I mean of his Soul and Genius) is a certain kind of noble Pride, and poſitive Aſſertion of his Opinions. He is every where confident of his own Reaſon, and aſſuming an abſolute Command not only over his vulgar Reader, but even his Patron *Memmius*. For he is always bidding him attend, as if he had the Rod over him; and uſing a Magiſterial Authority, while he inſtructs him. From his time to ours, ſays *Dryden*, I know none ſo like him, as our Poet and Philoſopher of *Malmsbury*. This is that perpetual *Dictatorſhip* which is exercis'd by *Lucretius*; who though often in the wrong, yet ſeems to deal *bonâ fide* with his *Reader*, and tells him nothing, but what he thinks; in which plain ſincerity, I believe he differs from our *Hobbs*, who (ſays *Dryden*) could not but be convinc'd, or at leaſt doubt of ſome *Eternal Truths* which he has oppos'd. But for *Lucretius*, he ſeems to diſdain all manner of Replies, and is ſo confident of his Cauſe, that he is before hand with his *Antagoniſts*; urging for them, what ever he imagin'd they could ſay; and leaving them, as he ſuppoſes, without an Objection for the future. All this too, with ſo much ſcorn and indignation, as if he were aſſur'd of the *Triumph*, before he enter'd into the *Liſts*. From this Sublime and daring *Genius* of his, it muſt (ſays *Dryden*) of neceſſity come to paſs, that his thoughts muſt be Maſculine, full of Argumentation, and that ſufficiently warm. From the ſame fiery Temper proceeds the Loftineſs of his Expreſſions, and the perpetual Torrent of his Verſe, where the Barrenneſs

rennes of his Subject does not too much constrain the quickness of his Fancy. For there is no doubt to be made, (*says Dryden*) but that he cou'd have been every where as *Poetical*, as he is in his *Descriptions*, and in the *Moral* part of his *Philosophy*, if he had not aim'd more to *Instruct* in his *System* of *Nature*, than to *Delight*. But he was bent upon making *Memmius* a Materialist, and teaching him to defie an *Invisible Power*: In short, says *Dryden*, he was so much an *Atheist*, that he forgot sometimes to be a *Poet*. Dryd. *Pref to the* Sylvæ: *Or, The Second Part of* Poetical Miscellanies.

Dr. *Thomas Burnet*, in the Second Book of his *Theory* of the *Earth*, *chap.* x. is of Opinion, That *Lucretius* was an *Epicuræan*, more from his Inclination, and the bent of his Spirit, than from Reason, or any Force of Argument. For though his Suppositions be very precarious, and his Reasonings all a long very slight, he will many times strut and triumph, as if he had wrested the *Thunder* out of *Jove*'s Right-Hand; and a *Mathematician* (*says Burnet*) is not more confident of his *Demonstration*, than *he* seems to be of the Truth of his shallow *Philosophy*.

Marcus Valerius Martialis,

BOrn at *Bilbo* in *Spain*, in the Reign of *Claudius* the Emperour. When he was Twenty Years of Age he came to *Rome* under *Nero*, and there continued Thirty Five Years, in the good esteem of *Titus*, but

eſpecially of *Domitian*, by whom he was advanced to the *Tribunate* and *Equeſtrian* Dignity: But upon *Domitian*'s Death, he declin'd in his Intereſt; and therefore in *Trajan*'s time, he return'd into his own Country; and there, after he had finiſh'd his Twelfth Book of *Epigrams*, in the Seventy Fifth Year of his Age he died, being reduc'd to very great poverty. The other Two Books, *viz.* the *Thirteenth* and *Fourteenth*, are called, *Xenia*, and *Apophoreta*, and by many thought to have been Writ by ſome other Hand.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. ſays, the trueſt Character that can be given of *Martial*'s *Epigrams*, is what *Martial* himſelf has given, *lib.* 1. *Epigr.* 17.

Sunt bona, ſunt quædam Mediocria, ſunt mala plura.

Pliny the Younger, in the 21. *Epiſtle* of his Third Book, tells *Priſcus*, That *Martial* had a great deal of Wit and Smartneſs; and that there was diffus'd throughout his whole Work abundance of *Salt* and *Gaul*; but yet, that he ſomtimes ſhow'd great Candour.

Adrianus Turnebus, *lib.* 13. *cap.* 19. *Adverſar.* ſays, *Martial* was a Pleaſant, Witty *Poet*; that he can by no means be of their Opinion, who look upon him as an *idle Buffoon*; and that his *Epigrams*, let theſe men ſay what they pleaſe, are Writ with a great deal of Elegance.

Julius Scaliger, in his Third Book *De Poetica*, *cap.* 126. tells us, That the peculiar Properties of an *Epigram*, are *Brevity* and *Smartneſs*; this laſt quality, as *Scaliger* obſerves, *Catullus* did not always arrive at; but the moſt acute *Martial* never fail'd.

And in the Sixth Book, *pag.* 838. *Scaliger* remarks, That many of *Martial*'s *Epigrams* are Divine, and that the Style is both pure and exact, and very proper for

that

that great veriety of Matter; that his Verſes are eaſie and natural, and, in a Word, that they are very good. As for his other *Epigrams* that are obſcene, (*ſays Scaliger*) I am ſo far from paſſing any Judgment on them, that indeed I have not ſo much as read them.

What think'ſt thou, *Janus Lernatius?* ſays *Lipſius*, was not *Scaliger*, who thought *Martial*'s Verſes ſmooth, *eaſie* and *natural*, and many of his *Epigrams* to be *Divine*, more in the right; than *he* who calls him an *idle Buffoon?* Which undecent Expreſſion (*ſays Lipſius*) I am ſorry ſo great a Man ſhould apply ſo ill. 'Tis true indeed, *Martial* is nothing compar'd to *Catullus*, I know it well enough; but then this I know too, (*ſays Lipſius*) that though ſome of *Catullus*'s *Epigrams* are not common and ordinary, yet all are not extraordinary. There are indeed many Lewd and Obſcene things in *Martial*; and take my Word for't, (*ſays Lipſius*) in that little Book of *Catullus* there are every whit as immodeſt Expreſſions, but not ſo many. To conclude, (*ſays Lipſius*) he muſt be very ignorant, who knows not, that this was the fault of the Age. **Lipſ.** *lib.* 1. *Epiſtolicarum Quæſtionum, Epiſt.* v.

Eraſmus, in *Dialogo Ciceroniano, pag.* 147. remarks, That *Martial* had much of *Ovid*'s Style, which was eaſie and natural; nay, that he had ſomewhat of the *Air* of *Cicero*: But *he tells us*, he does not mean in his *Epiſtles*, which he Writ before ſome of his Books; which, as *Eraſmus* obſerves, God knows have little of *Cicero* in them.

Morhoſius, in his *De Pataviniſate Livianâ, pag.* 160. tells us, That though *Martial* be charg'd by ſome ill-natur'd *Criticks*, for uſing ſometimes the *Spaniſh-Dialect*; yet this ought not to deprive him of the juſt honour that's due to him, for his great Elegancy in the *Latin* Tongue.

But notwithſtanding *our Author* has had ſuch conſiderable *Advocates*, that appear'd for him; yet this has not

not frighten'd ſome from attacking him in the moſt opprobrious Manner: Thus,

Muretus ſays, That *Martial* compar'd to *Catullus*, is an idle ſawcy Fellow, a meer *Droll.*

Lilius Gyraldus ſays, That his *Epigrams* never pleas'd any but a company of Aſſes.

And *Raphael Volaterranus* tells us, That *Martial's Epigrams* are not fit to be read; for that they contain neither *Elegancy*, nor *Morality.*

Voſſius, *lib.* 3. *Inſtitutionum Poeticarum*, *pag.* 107. obſerves to us, That *Martial* was one of thoſe Authors, who at the ſame time he reprov'd Vice, taught it; and though he deſerv'd high Commendation for the greateſt part of his *Epigrams*; yet by thoſe few that were *Obſcene*, he had done infinitely more miſchief, than by the *Others* he had done good.

Rapin remarks, That Men of a good Taſte, preferr'd the way of *Catullus*, before that of *Martial*; there being more of true *delicacy* in *that*, than in *this.* And in theſe latter Ages, (*ſays Rapin*) we have ſeen a Noble *Venetian*, named *Andreas Naugerius*, who had an exquiſite diſcernment, and who by a natural *antipathy* againſt all that which is call'd *Point*, or the *nipping Word* in the *Epigram*, which he judg'd to be of an ill reliſh, Sacrific'd every Year in Ceremony a Volume of *Martial's Epigrams* to the *Manes* of *Catullus*, in honour to *his* Character, which he judg'd was to be preferr'd to that of *Martial.*

John

John Milton,

WAS one whoſe Natural Parts did deſervedly give him a place amongſt the Principal of our *Engliſh Poets.* He was Author (not to mention his other Works, both in *Latin* and *Engliſh*, by which his Fame is ſufficiently known to all the Learned of *Europe*) of Two *Heroick* Poems, and a *Tragedy*; namely, *Paradiſe Loſt*; *Paradiſe Regain'd*; and *Samſon Agoniſtes*; in which he is generally thought to have very much reviv'd the Majeſty, and true *Decorum* of *Heroick Poeſie* and *Tragedy.*

Dryden tells us, That in *Epique* Poetry, the *Engliſh* have only to boaſt of *Spencer* and *Milton*; neither of whom wanted either *Genius* or *Learning*, to have been perfect Poets; and yet both of them are liable to many Cenſures.—As for *Milton*, ſays *Dryden*, whom we all admire with ſo much Juſtice, his *Subject* is not that of an *Heroick* Poem; properly ſo call'd: His Deſign is the loſing of our Happineſs; his Event is not proſperous, like that of all other *Epique* Works: His Heavenly Machines are many, and his Humane Perſons are but two. But I will not (ſays *Dryden*) take Mr. *Rimer's* Work out of his Hands: He has promis'd the World a *Critique* on that Author; wherein, tho' he will not allow his Poem for *Heroick*, I hope he will grant us, that his Thoughts are elevated, his Words ſounding, and that no Man has ſo happily Copy'd the Manner of *Homer*; or ſo Copiouſly tranſlated his *Greciſms*, and the *Latin* Elegancies of *Virgil*. 'Tis true, ſays *Dryden*, he runs into a flat of Thought, ſometimes for a Hundred Lines together,

together, but 'tis when he is got into a Track of Scripture: His Antiquated Words were his Choice, not his Necessity; for therein he imitated *Spencer*, as *Spencer* did *Chaucer*. And tho', perhaps, the love of their Masters, may have transported *both* too far, in the frequent use of them; yet in my Opinion, says *Dryden*, *Obsolete* words may then be laudably reviv'd, when either they are more *Sounding*, or more *Significant* than those in practice: And when their Obscurity is taken away, by joyning other Words to them which clear the Sense; according to the Rule of *Horace*, for the admission of New Words. But in both Cases, says *Dryden*, a Moderation is to be observ'd, in the use of them: For unnecessary *Coynage*, as well as unnecessary *Revival*, runs into Affectation; a fault to be avoided on either hand. Neither (says *Dryden*) will I justifie *Milton*, for his *Blank Verse*, tho' I may excuse him, by the Example of *Hannibal Caro*, and other *Italians*, who have us'd it: For whatever Causes he alledges for the abolishing of *Rhyme*, his own particular Reason is plainly this, that *Rhyme* was not *his* Talent; he had neither the Ease of doing it, nor the Graces of it; which is manifest in his *Juvenilia*, or Verses written in his Youth: Where his *Rhyme* is always constrain'd and forc'd, and comes hardly from him at an Age when the Soul is most pliant; and the Passion of love, makes almost every Man a *Rhymer*, though not a Poet. **Dryd.** *Dedic.* before the *Translat.* of *Juvenal*, *pag.* 8, 9.

I consulted (says *Dryden*) a greater Genius than *Cowley*, (without offence to the *Manes* of that Noble Author) I mean *Milton*, for the *Beautiful Turns* of *Words* and *Thoughts*. But as he endeavours every where to express *Homer*, whose Age had not arriv'd to that

fineness,

fineneſs, I found in him (ſays *Dryden*) a true Sublimity, lofty Thoughts, which were cloath'd with admirable *Greciſms*, and *Ancient Words*, which he had been digging from the Mines of *Chaucer*, and of *Spencer*, and which, with all their *Ruſticity*, had ſomewhat of *Venerable* in them: But, ſays *Dryden*, I found not *there* what I look'd for, *viz.* any *Elegant Turns*, either on the *Word*, or on the *Thought*. Dryd. *Ibid. pag.* 50.

The *Authors* of the *Athenian Mercury*, in Anſwer to the 3*d* Queſtion of *Vol.* 5. *Numb.* 14. *viz. Whether* Milton *and* Waller *were not the beſt Engliſh Poets? and which the better of the two?* do reply in *theſe Words:*

We ſhall anſwer this *double Queſtion* together: They were *both* Excellent in their Kind, and exceeded each other, and all beſides. *Milton* was the *fulleſt* and *loftieſt*; *Waller* the *neateſt* and moſt *correct* Poet we ever had. But yet we think *Milton* wrote too little in *Verſe*, and too much in *Proſe*, to carry the Name of *Beſt* from all Others; and Mr. *Waller*, tho' a full and noble Writer, yet comes not up in our Judgments to that——*Mens divinior atque os*——*Magna Sonaturum*, as *Horace* calls it, which *Milton* has, and wherein we think he was never equall'd.—His Deſcription of the *Pandæmonium*, his Battels of the Angels, his Creation of the World, his Digreſſion of *Light*, in his *Paradiſe Loſt*, are all Inimitable Pieces; And even that *antique Style* which he uſes, ſeems to become the Subject, like the ſtrange Dreſſes wherein we repreſent the old *Heroes*. The Deſcription of *Samſon*'s Death, the artificial and delicate preparation of the *Incidents* and *Narrations*, the *Turn* of the *whole*, and more than all, the terrible *Satyr* on *Woman*, in his Diſcourſe with *Dalilah*, are undoubtedly of a piece with his other Writings; and to ſay nothing of his *Paradiſe Regain'd*, whereof he had only finiſh'd the moſt barren

part, in his *Juvenile* Poems; Thoſe on *Mirth* and *Melancholly*; an *Elegy* on his Friend that was drown'd; and eſpecially a *Fragment* of the *Paſſion*, are incomparable: However, we think him not ſo *general* a Poet, as ſome we have formerly had, and others ſtill ſurviving.

John Oldham,

THE Son of a Non-Conformiſt Miniſter, was born at *Shipton* in *Gloceſterſhire*, on the 9*th.* of *Auguſt*, 1653. He was of St. *Edmund's Hall* in *Oxford.* He died of the ſmall Pox, on the 9*th.* of *Decemb.* 1683.

Winſtanley calls Mr. *John Oldham*, The Delight of the *Muſes*, and Glory of theſe laſt Times; a Man utterly unknown to me, ſays the *ſame Author*, but by his Works; which none can read but with Wonder and Admiration; ſo pithy his Strains, ſo ſententious his Expreſſions, ſo Elegant his Oratory, ſo ſwimming his Language, ſo ſmooth his Lines; in *Tranſlating* out-doing the *Original*, and in Invention matchleſs.

Dryden, To the Memory of Mr. *Oldham.*

Farewell, too little and too lately known,
Whom I began to think and call my own;
For ſure our Souls were near ally'd; and thine
Caſt in the ſame Poetick Mould with Mine.

One Common Note on either Lyre did strike,
And Knaves and Fools were both abhorr'd alike:
To the same Goal did both our Studies drive,
The last set out, the soonest did arrive.
Thus Nisus *fell upon the Slippery place,*
While his young Friend perform'd and won the Race.
O early ripe! to thy abundant Store
What could advancing Age have added more?
It might (what Nature never gives the young)
Have taught the Numbers of thy Native Tongue.
But Satyr *needs not those, and* Wit *will shine*
Through the harsh Cadence of a rugged Line.
A noble Error, and but seldom made,
When Poets are by too much force betray'd.
Thy generous Fruits, tho' gather'd e're their prime,
Still shew'd a Quickness; and maturing time
But mellows what we write to the dull Sweets of Rime.
Once more, Hail and Farewell; Farewell thou young,
But ah too short, Marcellus *of our Tongue;*
Thy Brows with Ivy, and with Laurels bound;
But Fate and Gloomy Night encompass thee around.

Dryden.

Durfey in Memory of *John Oldham:*

Obscure and Cloudy did the day appear,
As Heaven design'd to blot it from the Year:
The Elements all seem'd to disagree,
At least, I'm sure, they were at strife in me:
Possest with Spleen, which Melancholy bred;
When Rumor *told me, that my Friend was dead,*
That Oldham, *honour'd for his early Worth,*
Was cropt, like a sweet Blossom, from the Earth,

Where late he grew, delighting every Eye
In his rare Garden of Philosophy.
The fatal sound new Sorrows did infuse,
And all my Griefs were doubled at the News:
For we with mutual Arms of Friendship strove,
Friendship the true and solid part of Love;
And he so many Graces had in store,
That Fame *or* Beauty *could not bind me more.*
His Wit in his Immortal Verse appears,
Many his Vertues were, tho' few his Years;
Which were so spent, as if by Heaven contriv'd
To lash the Vices of the longer liv'd.
None was more skilful, none more learn'd than he,
A Poet in its sacred Quality:
Inspir'd above, and could command each Passion,
Had all the Wit without the Affectation.
A calm of Nature still possest his Soul,
No canker'd Envy did his Breast controul:
Modest as Virgins that have never known
The jilting Breeding of the nauseous Town;
And easie as his Numbers that sublime
His lofty Strains, and beautifie his Rhime,
Till the Time's Ignomy inspir'd his Pen,
And rouz'd the drowsie Satyr from his Den;
Then fluttering Fops were his Aversion still,
And felt the Power of his Satyrick *Quill.*
The Spark whose Noise proclaims his empty Pate,
That struts along the Mall *with antick Gate;*
And all the Phyllis *and the* Chloris *Fools*
Were damn'd by his Invective Muse in Shoals.
Who on the Age look'd with impartial Eyes,
And aim'd not at the Person, *but the* Vice.
To all true Wit he was a constant Friend,
And as he well could Judge, *could well* Commend.

The

The mighty Homer *he with care perus'd,*
And that great Genius *to the World infus'd;*
Immortal Virgil, *and* Lucretius *too,*
And all the Seeds o'th' Soul his Reason knew:
Like Ovid, *could the Ladies Hearts assail,*
With Horace *sing, and lash with* Juvenal.
Unskill'd in nought that did with Learning dwell,
But Pride to know he understood it well.
Adieu thou modest Type of perfect Man;
Ah, had not thy Perfections that began
In Life's bright Morning been eclips'd so soon,
We all had bask'd and wanton'd in thy Noon;
But Fate grew envious of thy growing Fame,
And knowing Heav'n, from whence thy Genius *came,*
Assign'd thee by immutable Decree
A glorious Crown of Immortality,
Snatch'd thee from all thy Mourning Friends below,
Just as the Bays were planting on thy Brow.
Thus Worldly Merit has the Worlds Regard;
But Poets *in the next have their Reward:*
And Heaven in Oldham's *Fortune seem'd to show,*
No Recompence was good enough below:
So to prevent the Worlds ingrateful Crimes,
Enrich'd his Mind, and bid him die betimes.

T. Durfey.

This most celebrated Poet died in the House of his Noble Patron, the Earl of *Kingstone*, at *Holme Pierpont*, in the year, 1683. and was buried in the Church there. Soon after was a Monument put over his Grave, with this *Inscription* thereon.

M. S. Joh. Oldham *Poetæ, quô nemo sacro furore plenior, nemo rebus Sublimior, aut Verbis feliciùs audax; cujus famam omni ævo propria satis consecrabunt Carmina.*

Quem

Quem inter primos Honoratiſſimi Gulielmi *Comitis de* Kingſtone *Patroni Sui Amplexus* Variolis *correptum, heu nimis immatura Mors rapuit, & in Cœleſtem tranſtulit Chorum. Natus apud* Shipton *in Agro* Gloceſtrenſi, *in Aula* Sti. Edmundi *Graduatus. Obijt die Decembris nono, Anno Dom.* 1683. *Ætatis* 30.

Oppian,

A *Cicilian*, a famous Poet, who liv'd in the time of the Emperours, *Severus* and *Caracalla*; He wrote a Poem of *Fiſhing*, call'd *Halicutica*; and another of *Hunting*, call'd *Cynegetica*; and a third of *Fowling*.

He dedicated his two Poems of *Fiſhing* and *Hunting*, both yet extant, to the Emperour *Caracalla*, of whom he receiv'd for every Verſe a Piece of Gold; which was the occaſion of their being call'd *Golden Verſes*.

He dy'd of the *Plague* about the latter end of *Caracalla*'s Reign, in the Thirtieth Year of his Age.

Julius Scaliger, had a moſt particular eſteem for *this Author*; he tells us, in his *Poetica*, *pag.* 664, and 758. That *Oppian* is a moſt Excellent Poet; that he is agreeable and eaſie; his Style natural, and yet ſublime, eloquent and harmonious. So that, he has not only ſurpaſs'd *Gratius* and *Nemeſianus*, who have writ of the ſame Subject; but he ſeems to have the very Air of *Virgil*, whom he endeavour'd particularly to imitate; and indeed, ſays *Scaliger*, I always thought, *he* gave us the true, lively Image of that *Divine Poet*.

Borrichius,

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, *pag.* 16. obſerves, That the *Style* of *Oppian* is Copious and Beautiful, abounding with Excellent Sentences, ſometimes a little obſcure, but always Learned; And that his *Prefaces* are ſo very elaborate, and of that *Aſiatick* form, that they may well enough paſs for ſo many *Harangues*, and *Panegyrick Orations.*

Le Sieur Craſſo, in his account of the *Greek Poets*, Writ in *Italian*, ſays, That the particular excellency of *Oppian* lies in his *Thoughts*, and *Compariſons*; and, that he had done one very difficult thing, which was, his obſerving an Uniformity in all parts, and yet that he could both preſerve the Elegancy of his Style, and at the ſame time ſo throughly proſecute the Subject he had in hand.

Tanaquillus Faber, in his Firſt Book of *Epiſtles*, *Epiſt.* 63. ſpeaking of *Oppian*, calls him, That admirable, and never to be enough commended *Poet.*

Iſaac Caſaubon, in an *Epiſtle* to *Cunradus Ritterſhuſius*, Dated in *September*, 1597. ſays, Never any Man Lov'd *Oppian* better than he did.

Cunradus Ritterſhuſius, in his *Preface* before *Oppian's* Works, tells us, That *Oppian* was a very good Man, and an Excellent Poet; agreeable to all, offenſive to none; that his Death was much lamented by all good Men, whether they were his Fellow-Citizens, (who both built him a Monument, and erected his Statue) or ſuch Foreigners as had ever heard of his Fame.

He likewiſe *adds*, that *Oppian's* Poems were very choice and extraordinary, and came behind none of the *Greek Poets*; nay, that they were to be preferr'd before the greateſt part of them; ſo that in his Opinion, every Verſe was Richly worth a Piece of *Gold.*

Nor

Nor am I (*ſays Ritterſhuſius*) ſingular herein; for I dare be hold to ſay, that all the Men of Learning and Prudence are of the ſame Judgment.

Dr. *Brown*, in his Firſt Book, and Eighth Chapter of *Vulgar Errors*, remarks, That *Oppian* in his *Poems* of *Hunting* and *Fiſhing*, hath but ſparingly inſerted the Vulgar Conceptions thereof. So that abating the annual Mutation of Sexes in the *Hiæna*, the ſingle Sex of the *Rhinoceros*, the *Antipathy* between two *Drums* of a *Lamb* and a *Wolfe's* Skin, the *informity* of *Cubs*, the *Venation* of *Centaures*, the *Copulation* of the *Muræna* and the *Viper*, with ſome few others, *Oppian* may (*ſays Brown*) be Read with great delight and profit. It is not without ſome Wonder his Elegant Lines are ſo neglected; for ſurely hereby (*ſays Brown*) we reject one of the beſt *Epick Poets.*

Rapin, in his *Reflexions* upon *Ariſtotle's* Treatiſe of *Poeſie*, *part* 2. *ſect.* XV. ſays, that *Oppian* is dry.

Claudius Verderius, in his *Cenſure* of *Ancient Authors*, obſerves to us, That *Oppian* did commonly miſtake one Fiſh for another.

Arnoldus de Boot, *lib* 3. *cap.* 11. *Animadverſ. Sacr. in Vetus Teſtamentum*, remarks, That *Oppian* in his Deſcription of a *Well-bred Horſe*, has taken ſeveral Things out of the Thirty Ninth Chapter of *Job*.

Publius

Publius Ovidius Naſo,

A Famous *Poet*, born at *Sulmo*, which is Nineteen Miles diſtant from *Rome*, in the Second Year of the 184. *Olympiad*, One and Forty Years before *Chriſt*. He was once in great Favour with *Auguſtus*; but either for ſome freedom us'd with his Daughter *Julia*, or for his Laſcivious Verſes, he Baniſh'd him to *Pontus*, at Fifty Years of Age; where, after Eight Years and ſome Months, he died.

Many of his Writings are extant, but to our great grief ſome are quite loſt, as his *Halieutica*, his *Medea*, and the Six laſt Books of his *Faſti*.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, *pag.* 51. tells us, That *Ovid* had ſpent his Youth in the Study of the *Law*, but afterwards finding his *Genius* more inclin'd to *Amours* and *Poetry*, he went to *Rome*, and there, by reaſon of the ſweetneſs of his Temper, the nobleneſs of his Extraction, and the beauty of his Poetry, he ſoon grew into Fame and Reputation. And indeed, ſays *Borrichius*, never was there a *Poet* more eaſie and more natural, or of greater quickneſs and readineſs than *Ovid*.

Eraſmus, in his *Dialogus Ciceronianus*, *pag.* 147. calls *Ovid*, The *Cicero* among the *Poets*.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 2. is of the opinion, That no Man ever did, or can imitate, that eaſineſs of Style which was in *Ovid*.

But *Voſſius*, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, *pag.* 30. tells us, That though indeed generally *Ovid* is very eaſie and Natural in his Style, yet ſometimes, by his *Tranſpoſing* of *Words*, he ſeems to be quite otherwiſe.

As when at the very beginning of his *De Arte Amandi*, he ſays,

Siquis in hoc artem populo non novit Amandi.

Whereas (*ſays Voſſius*) it might better have been expreſs'd thus:

Siquis in hoc populo legem non novit Amandi.

Daniel Heinſius, in his *De Tragœdiæ Conſtitutione, cap.* 13. ſays, That *Ovid* Tranſcends all other Authors either in making things that are *falſe* ſeem *probable*; or things that are *obſcure*, *perſpicuous*; and in curiouſly adorning both the *one* and the *other*; or elſe in relating things *plainly*, and *nakedly*, as they are.

He further *obſerves*, That *Ovid* is every where full of *Moral Inſtructions*; even when he is frolickſome and wanton: That no body knew better how to expreſs himſelf, nor how to level his Thoughts to the meaneſt Capacity with more advantage.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Prolegomenis Manilianis*, remarks, That it was a falſe, and an undeſerved Character that ſome had affix'd to *Ovid*, *viz. That he never knew when to give over.*

Obertus Giſanius, in his *Apolog. pro Poet. Lat. pag.* 484. tells us, That *Ovid* was ſo exquiſitely skill'd in the *Latin* Tongue, that, according to the opinion of all Learned Men, if the *Roman* Language were utterly loſt, and nothing left but the Works of *Ovid*, they alone would be ſufficient to retrieve it again.

Quintilian, *lib.* X. *cap.* 1. informs us, That *Ovid* in his *Heroicks* is frolickſome and wanton, and that he has too good

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an Opinion of himſelf; but yet in ſome reſpects, he deſerves to be commended.

Seneca, in the Third Book of his *Natural Queſtions*, *cap.* 27. calls *Ovid* the moſt Ingenious of all the *Poets*: but, as he obſerves, 'twas a thouſand pities, he ſpent his excellent Talent upon ſuch Childiſh, trifling Subjects, as ſome of *his* were.

Dryden, in his *Pref. to the* Sylvæ, *or the Second Part of* Poetical Miſcellanies, remarks, That *Ovid* with all his ſweetneſs, has but little variety of Numbers and Sound; that *he* his always as it were upon the *Hand-Gallop*, and his Verſe runs upon *Carpet-Ground*. He avoids all *Synalæpha's*, or cutting off one *Vowel* when it comes before another, in the following Word: So that minding only Smoothneſs, he wants both Variety and Majeſty.

Dryden for all this, in his *Dedication* before *Examen Poeticum*, or the *Third Part* of *Miſcellany Poems*, tells us, That *Ovid* is certainly more palatable to the Reader, than any of the *Roman* Wits, though ſome of them are more Lofty, ſome more inſtructive, and others more Correct. He had Learning enough, ſays *Dryden*, to make him equal to the Beſt. But as his Verſe came eaſily, he wanted the toyl of Application to amend it. He is often Luxuriant, both in his Fancy and Expreſſions; and not always Natural. If *Wit* be *Pleaſantry*, ſays *Dryden*, he has it to exceſs: But if it be *Propriety*, *Lucretius*, *Horace*, and above all *Virgil*, are his Superiours.

Tanaquillus Faber, in his Firſt Book of *Epiſtles*, *Epiſt.* 37. ſays, That *Ovid* is full of Wit in every part of him, which no Man, who wanted not Wit himſelf, did ever deny; and that all Men do likewiſe agree, his Learning is every where Conſpicuous: But I know not, ſays *Faber*, whether *Ovid* did any where ſhew more Wit and Learning, than in his Second Book *De Triſtibus*. Nor is

this (ſays *my Author*) much to be Wonder'd at; ſince *he* was to plead his own cauſe before *Auguſtus*, a *Prince* of *Learning*, and who was alſo a *Poet.*

And in the ſame Book, *Epiſt.* 71. *He tells us,* he does not know in all the *Latin Tongue,* any thing of greater Wit and Elegancy, ever Writ by any *Poet,* than *Ovid*'s *Eighth Elegy* of the Second Book *Ponticorum*; every thing in it ſo neat, ſo fine, ſo full of variety, ſo Pathetick, and ſo very Elegant.

What a high opinion *Ovid* had of the *Elegies* of his own Compoſing, plainly appears by thoſe two arrogant Verſes of his, in the *Remedia Amoris, verſ.* 395, 396.

Tantum ſe nobis Elegi *debere fatentur*;
Quantum Virgilio *nobile debet* Epos.

He thought the World was as much beholden to him for the *Elegy*, as ever it was to *Virgil* for the *Epick.* But had this come from ſome other hand, it would certainly have carried greater Modeſty, if not Authority.

Rapin, in his *Reflex. on* Ariſtotle *of* Poeſie, *part* 2. *ſect.* 29. ſays, That they who have Writ *Elegy* beſt amongſt the *Latins*, are *Tibullus*, *Propertius*, and *Ovid. Tibullus* is elegant and polite; *Propertius* noble and high; but *Ovid* is to be preferr'd to *both*; becauſe *he* is more Natural, more moving, and more paſſionate; and thereby *he* has better expreſſed the Character of *Elegy* than the *others.*

But notwithſtanding this, the *ſame Author* tells us, in his *Comparing* of *Homer* and *Virgil*, *cap.* xi. That many of thoſe *Examples* and *Compariſons*, which *Ovid* makes uſe of in his *De Triſtibus*, and his other *Elegies*, are meerly Superfluous, and do plainly ſhew, that

that *Ovid* was not arriv'd to a full Maturity of Judgment.

Julius Scaliger, In the Sixth Book of his *Poetica*, *pag.* 855. remarks, That *Ovid's De Triſtibus* and *De Ponto* (both which Titles he finds fault with) are leſs elaborate than his other Pieces, and eſpecially than his *Epiſtles*.

Abraham Cowley, in his *Preface*, obſerves, that one may ſee through the Style of *Ovid De Triſtibus*, the humbled and dejected condition of *Spirit* with which he Wrote it; there ſcarce remain any footſteps of that *Genius*, *Quem nec Jovis ira, nec ignes*, &c. The Cold of the Country (ſays *Cowley*) had ſtrucken through all his Faculties, and *benumb'd* the very *Feet* of his *Verſes*. *He* is *himſelf*, methinks, like one of the *Stories* of his own *Metamorphoſis*; and though there remain ſome weak *Reſemblances* of *Ovid* at *Rome*, it is but as he ſays of *Niobe*,

In vultu color eſt ſine Sanguine, Lumina mæſtis
Stant immota genis; nihil eſt in Imagine vivum
Flet tamen——

Ovid. Metamorph. *Lib.* 6.

How highly *Ovid* eſteem'd, and valued the Fifteen Books of his *Metamorphoſis*, he himſelf gives us to underſtand, by thoſe Two Verſes, towards the End of the ſaid Work:

Jamque Opus exegi: quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignes,
Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetuſtas.

Petrus Crinitus, in his *De Poet. Lat.* ſays, That *Ovid*, in his *Metamorphoſis*, copied after one *Parthenius* of *Chios*, a Poet, who had writ in *Greek* an excellent Poem upon

upon the ſame Subject.—*He* further *ſays*, This Work of *Ovid*'s was ſo highly eſteem'd of by the *Grecian* Wits, that they tranſlated it into their own Language; and that it was full of great Variety of Learning; although the Author, as he himſelf atteſts, had not put his finiſhing hand to it. And *Crinitus* aſſures us, it was publiſh'd by ſome of his Friends, in his abſence, and without his Knowledge.

Voſſius alſo, in his *De Imitatione Poeticâ*, *cap.* 6. *pag.* 26. informs us, That *Ovid* himſelf did not think his *Metamorphoſis* correct enough; which was the ground of his Complaint in the firſt and third Book *De Triſtibus*. And therefore, when he was to be baniſh'd, he had fully reſolv'd to have burnt it; as he had done by ſome others of his Books, according to his own Relation in the *Tenth Elegy* of the fourth Book, *De Triſtibus*. But it was then too late; for his Friends had by that time got Copies of it.

Rapin obſerves to us, in his *Reflex.* on *Ariſtotle*'s Treatiſe of *Poeſie*, *part* 2. *ſect.* XV. That *Ovid* has *Wit*, *Art*, and *Deſign* in his *Metamorphoſis*; but withal he has *Youthfulneſs* that could hardly be pardon'd, but for the Vivacity of his *Wit*, and a certain Happineſs of *Fancy*.

He alſo *tells* us, in his Compariſon of *Homer* and *Virgil*, *chap.* X. That *Ovid* both in his *Metamorphoſis*, and his *Epiſtolæ Heroidum*, as alſo *Velleius Paterculus*, were the firſt Authors who brought into faſhion the uſe of extraordinary and ſurprizing *Epithets*; whereas *that Age* had (before) in a particular manner affected a plainneſs of Speech, and an unaffected ſort of Dialect. But, ſays *Rapin*, Theſe Authors had Judgment enough how to put off theſe falſe Diamonds.

Borrichius,

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, *pag.* 51. remarks, That *Ovid*'s Style in his *Metamorphoſis*, is not ſo lofty as in ſome other Pieces of his; but at the ſame time he owns, there is beauty and exactneſs enough in it. *He* further *obſerves*, that the fifteen Books of the *Metamorphoſis*, are in this reſpect highly to be admir'd, inaſmuch as they do, in that wonderful Order, and as it were with a certain Chain and concatenation, preſent to us almoſt all the *Fables* of the *Ancients*, from the beginning of the World, to that very time.

And to the ſame effect, *Voſſius*, *lib.* 3. *Inſtitut. Poetic. pag.* 19, 20. tells us, That *Ovid* had ſhew'd ſuch prodigious Art and Skill in the cloſe Connexion of theſe *Fables*, that he is (indeed) worthy of the higheſt admiration.

And we find, the very ſame thing is affirm'd by *Gulielmus Canterus*, *lib.* 1. *Novarum Lectionum*, *cap.* xx. where he informs us, that he was ſo Charm'd with the Excellent Order, that *Ovid* had obſerv'd in the *Linking* and *Chaining* theſe *Fables* one to the Other; that he could not forbear reducing the whole Work into an *Epitome*; that ſo, as in a Picture, he might with one view ſee, and admire, the ſeveral parts of this moſt Incomparable Poem.

Petrus Crinitus ſays, That *Ovid* compos'd Six Books of his *Faſti*, which he ſent to *Germanicus* the Son of *Druſus*, the other Six, by reaſon of his ſudden Death, or, as many think, his unhappy Baniſhment, he could not go through with.

This, ſays *Crinitus*, is a very Learned Piece, and contains abundance of Choice Learning.

Julius Scaliger, *lib.* 6. *Poetices*, *pag.* 855. takes notice, That the Style of *Ovid* in his *Faſti*, is eaſie, ſoft, and natural; and that it is a Work which abounds with a great

great deal of Ancient Learning; and although the Subject is not always equally tractable, nor capable of being adorn'd; nor has he often Scope enough for his Wit; yet (says *Scaliger*) in many places of this *Poem*, he goes beyond himself in politeness and purity of Style.

Mr. *John Selden* was of the Opinion, that *Ovid* was not only a fine *Poet*, but (as a Man may say) a great *Canon-Lawyer*, as appears in his *Fasti*, where we have more of the *Festivals* of the *Old Romans*, than any where else: 'Tis pity, says *Selden*, the rest are lost. **Selden**'s Table-Talk, *pag.* 41.

Rapin, in his Comparison of *Homer* and *Virgil*, *chap.* xi. prefers the *Fasti* of *Ovid* before any of his other Works.

Here, says *Rapin*, we find both the Prudence and the Temper of his Elder Years; whereas every where else he shews himself a young Man.

Le Sieur Rosteau, in his *Censure* of *Books* and *Authors*, conceives, that *Ovid*'s *Epistles* are beyond any Man's power to imitate; And that they do far exceed either his *Metamorphosis*, or his *Fasti*.

Crinitus tells us, That *Ovid* in his *Epistles*, us'd very great Elegancy; and that they were compos'd with wonderful Art and Skill.

Scaliger, *lib.* 6. *Poetices*, *pag.* 855. says, The *Epistles* are the most polite of all the Works of *Ovid*; that the Thoughts are admirable, his Elegancy natural and easie; and, in a Word, that they have a true *Poetical* Air.

Rapin, in his Comparison of *Homer* and *Virgil*, *chap.* xi. mentioning *Ovid*'s *Epistolæ Heroidum*, he calls them, *The Flower of the Roman Wit.* Which yet he owns,

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fall very much ſhort, of that maturity of Judgment which is the chief Perfection of *Virgil.*

The *Writers* of the *Auguſt Hiſtory* report, That the Emperour *Ælius Verus*, was ſo much in love with that little Piece of *Ovid*, *De Arte Amandi*, that he would often read him in his Bed; and when he went to ſleep, he would uſe to put him under his Pillow.

Henricus Cornelius Agrippa, in his *De Vanitate Scientiarum*, *cap.* 63. obſerves, That there have been many both *Greek* and *Latin* Poets, who have diſcover'd their *Wanton Amours*, as *Callimachus*, *Philetes*, *Anacreon*, *Orphæus*, *Alceon*, *Pindar*, *Sappho*, *Tibullus*, *Catullus*, *Propertius*, *Virgil*, *Juvenal*, *Martial*, *Cornelius Gallus*, and many others, more like *Pandars* than *Poets*; though all of them were out-done by *Ovid* in his *Heroick Epiſtles*, dedicated to *Corinna*, which were alſo out-done by himſelf in his *De Arte Amandi*; which, ſays *Agrippa*, he might better have Entituled, *The Art of Whoring and Pimping*: The Learning whereof, becauſe it had Corrupted Youth with unchaſt Documents, therefore (ſays *Agrippa*) was the Author deſervedly baniſh'd by the Emperour *Octavianus Auguſtus*, to the fartheſt parts of the *North.*

It were to be wiſh'd, ſays *Voſſius*, *lib.* 11. *Inſtitutionum Poeticarum*, *pag.* 73. That *Ovid*'s *Medea* were Extant. For ſo great was the Wit of that Man, that ſcarce any thing *Humane*, is comparable to him; if he has any fault, it is, that, as *great Rivers* do, he ſometimes *overflows.* Which admit it be a fault, he ſufficiently makes amends for it, by his many Excellent Qualities.

Aulus Perſius Flaccus,

WAS born at *Volaterræ*, a City in *Hetruria*, now call'd *Tuſcany*, in *Italy*. He died in the 29*th*. Year of his Age, and in the 62 Year of *Chriſt*.

He wrote Six *Satyrs*, on which (as He himſelf tells us) he beſtow'd a great deal of labour and pains. And yet, ſays *Crinitus*, there are not thoſe wanting, who do affirm, that this Work is imperfect, and was never finiſh'd by *Perſius*. When theſe *Satyrs* were firſt Publiſh'd, *Crinitus* ſays, it is not to be imagin'd how highly they were eſteem'd among the Learned. *He* Copied after the Poet *Lucilius*, who was very ſharp in his *Invectives* againſt the Vices of the *Romans*.

Quintilian, *lib.* 10. *cap.* 1. ſays, That *Perſius* deſerv'd a great deal of true Glory, even by this one Book.

Martial tells us, That *Perſius* got more Credit by this one little Book, than others did by their many large Volumes:

Sæpius in libro memoratur Perſius *uno*,
Quàm levis in totâ Marſus *Amazonide.*
Martial. *lib.* 4. *Epigr.* 28.

Lilius Gyraldus remarks, That tho' the *Satyrs* of *Perſius* are very obſcure, and for the moſt part full of Things that are abſtruſe; yet for all that, he ought to be number'd among the *Good Authors*.

Perſius

Perſius *obſcure, but full of Senſe and Wit,*
Affected Brevity in all he Writ.
Boileau's *Art of* Poetry.

Voſſius lib. 6. Inſtitutionum Oratoriarum, pag. 454, ſays, That *Perſius* the *Satyriſt*, ought to be pardon'd for his often uſing ſuch bold and high-flown *Metaphors*. Since not only the *Soul*, but likewiſe the *Expreſſion* of that *Noble Youth*, aim'd at nothing but what was Great and Lofty.

Cardinal Bona, in his *Notitia Auctorum*, tells us, That *Perſius* was an acute *Satyriſt*, but obſcure; affecting a high topping Style; and that his frequent and extravagant *Metaphors*, did often cauſe him to be ſo Obſcure. Though, as *Bona* obſerves, the Obſcurity of *Perſius*, did oftentimes proceed from our being ignorant of ſeveral of thoſe Cuſtomes, which he alludes to, and which in his time even the *Meaneſt* of the *People* underſtood; which ſince we are *now* ignorant of, we do therefore (forſooth) conclude them to be *Myſteries*.

The truth on't is, ſays *Francis Vavaſſor*, the *Jeſuite*, in his *De Ludicrâ Dictione, pag.* 239, *&c.* I cannot but Wonder, what great and mighty Matters *Quintilian* and *Martial* found in the Six *Satyrs* of *Perſius*, which we ſo long after have not been able to find out, nay, not ſo much as to gueſs at. And yet certainly, there is nothing in him, but what may well appear Greater to us in *theſe days*, than ever poſſibly they cou'd to the *Ancients*; becauſe *they* were acquainted with many of the Cuſtoms that where in *his* time; and therefore they eſteem'd them (as well they might) to be Things not at all extraordinary; whereas the very ſame Things, by a diſtance of many Ages, ſeem to us as mighty Myſteries: So that *we* are

apt to call thoſe Things by the name of *Deep* and *Profound Learning*, which in *thoſe times* the *Servants* and *Trades-Men*, nay even the very *Mob* themſelves, perfectly underſtood. Hence therefore *Vavaſſor* Concludes, There is nothing in *Perſius*, that deſerves our higheſt commendation, much leſs our Admiration. For, *ſays he*, to ſpeak the truth, that which to me ſeems moſt remarkable in *this Author*, is his *Obſcurity*; which, in all probability, was the firſt ground of his being reputed ſo *Profoundly Learned*. His *Verſes*, ſays *Vavaſſor*, ſeem juſt like the *Oracles* of Old, which ſtand in need of ſome body to *Interpret* them: Now, if *Perſius* became thus *Obſcure*, before he was aware; it was certainly a great fault; but if he did it for the nonce, there is no reaſon why ſo many ſhould admire his Writings, which they underſtand not; Or, why they ſhould commend a Writer, who had no mind to be underſtood.— For my part, *ſays Vavaſſor*, I give to *Perſius* the deference that is due to him: I allow him his *jeſts*, his *dry bobbs*, his *Wit*, and his *Sarcaſms*: nor will I take from him his *Latin*, which as it is not the very beſt, ſo I muſt own, it is none of the Worſt.

Julius Scaliger, *lib.* 6. *Poetices*, *pag.* 838. remarks, That *Perſius* had a crabbed, unpleaſant ſort of Style; And, in plain terms, he calls him, a ſilly, Trifling Author, a perfect *Bragadochio*, and one who valued himſelf much upon the account of his Learning, which was hot and feaveriſh; and, in concluſion, *Scaliger* thought him by no means fit to come into Competition with *Juvenal* or *Horace*.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. and 2. calls *Perſius*, a ſorry Poet, and a moſt wretched Author; who minded nothing ſo much as to render himſelf *Obſcure*; for which reaſon he was call'd, *The blind Poet*. And yet for all this Character, *Scaliger* owns, they might by

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way of *Comment* write excellent Things upon him. As *Vavassor* observes *Casaubon* did, whose *Comment* upon *Persius*, as *he tells us*, was much more to be valu'd, than the Text it self.

Rapin, in the Second part of his *Reflex.* on *Aristotle* of *Poesie*, *sect.* 28. observes, That *Persius*, who to the gravity and vehemence of *Juvenal* had joyn'd *Obscurity* (caus'd by the affectation he had to appear *Learned*) has no better success, in making an Impression; because he yields no delight: Not but that he has (says *Rapin*) some *touches* of an *hidden delicacy*; but these Strokes are always wrap'd up in so much profound Learning, that there needs a *Comment* to unfold them; *He* speaks not but with *Sadness*, what by *Horace* is said with the greatest *Mirth* imaginable, whom sometimes he wou'd imitate. His morosenes, says *Rapin*, scarce ever leaves him; he speaks not of the *least Things* but in a *heat*; and he never *Sports*, but after the most *serious* manner in the World.

Vossius, *lib.* III. *Institut. Poetic. pag.* 41. will have it, That *Persius* either did not understand the Rules of *Satyr*, or at least that he ne're minded, or observ'd them; because he only attack'd some few *Particular Persons*, instead of reproving *Vice* in *General*: And when he had a mind to take notice of, or touch upon the Faults, or Actions of such *Particular Persons*, he commonly makes use of some general Name; such as *Titius*, or *Nævius*; which does not give us light enough to know, either the *Fact*, or the *Person*. And therefore, says *Vossius*, this Poem of *Persius* does scarce deserve the Name of a *Satyre*; because he reflects upon no body by Name.

Dryden

Dryden remarks, That as for the *Verſe* of *Perſius*, neither *Caſaubon* himſelf, nor any for him, can defend either his *Numbers*, or the *Purity* of his *Latin*. *Caſaubon* gives this point for loſt; and pretends not to juſtifie either the Meaſures, or the Words of *Perſius*: He is evidently beneath *Harace* and *Juvenal*, in both.

Then, as his Verſe is ſcabrous and hobling, and his Words not every where well choſen, the purity of *Latin* being more corrupted, than in the time of *Juvenal*, and conſequently of *Horace*, who writ when the Language was in the height of its perfection; ſo his Diction is hard; his *Figures* are generally too bold and daring; and his *Tropes*, particularly his *Metaphors*, inſufferably ſtrain'd.

In the third place, notwithſtanding all the diligence of *Caſaubon*, *Stelluti*, and a *Scotch* Gentleman (whom, *ſays Dryden*, I have heard extreamly commended for his *Illuſtrations* of him:) yet he is ſtill *obſcure*: Whether he affected not to be underſtood, but with difficulty; *Or*, whether the fear of his ſafety under *Nero*, compell'd him to this Darkneſs in ſome places; *Or*, that it was occaſion'd by his cloſe way of Thinking, and the brevity of his Style, and crowding of his Figures; *Or*, laſtly, whether after ſo long a time, many of his Words have been corrupted, and many Cuſtoms, and Stories relating to them, loſt to us; whether ſome of theſe Reaſons, or all, concurr'd to render him ſo Cloudy; we may be bold to affirm, (*ſays Dryden*) that the beſt of *Commentators* can but gueſs at his meaning, in many paſſages: And none can be certain that he has divin'd rightly.

After all, (*ſays Dryden*) *Perſius* was a Young Man, like his Friend and Contemporary *Lucan*: Both of them Men of extraordinary Parts, and great acquir'd Knowledge,

ledge, conſidering their Youth. But neither of them had arriv'd to that Maturity of Judgment, which is neceſſary to the Accompliſhing of a Form'd *Poet*. And this conſideration, as on the one hand it lays ſome Imperfections to their charge, ſo on the other ſide 'tis a candid excuſe for thoſe Failings, which are incident to Youth and inexperience; and we have more reaſon to wonder, how they, who dy'd before the Thirtieth Year of their Age, could Write ſo well, and think ſo ſtrongly; than to accuſe them of thoſe Faults, from which *Humane Nature*, and more eſpecially in *Youth*, can never poſſibly be exempted.

But (*ſays Dryden*) to conſider *Perſius* yet more cloſely: *He* rather inſulted over *Vice* and *Folly*, than expoſed them, like *Juvenal* and *Horace*. And as Chaſt, and Modeſt as *Perſius* is eſteem'd, it cannot be deny'd, but that in ſome places he is broad and fulſome, as the latter Verſes of the Fourth *Satire*, and of the Sixth, ſufficiently Witneſs. And 'tis to be believ'd, that he who Commits the ſame Crime often, and without Neceſſity, cannot but do it with ſome kind of Pleaſure.

But to come to a Concluſion, ſays *Dryden*, *Perſius* is manifeſtly below *Horace*; becauſe he borrows moſt of his greateſt Beauties from him: And *Caſaubon* is ſo far from denying this; that he has written a Treatiſe purpoſely concerning it; wherein he ſhews a multitude of his Tranſlations from *Horace*, and his Imitations of him, for the Credit of his Author; which he calls *Imitatio Horatiana*. **Dryd.** *Dedic.* before the *Tranſlat.* of *Juvenal*, *pag.* xxx.

Dryden tells us, That the *Philoſophy* in which *Perſius* was educated, and which he profeſſes through his whole Book, is the *Stoick*. And herein it is, ſays *Dryden*, that *Perſius* has excell'd both *Juvenal* and *Horace*. He ſticks

to

to his own *Philoſophy*: He ſhifts not ſides, like *Horace*, who is ſometimes an *Epicuræan*, ſometimes a *Stoick*, ſometimes an *Eclectick*; as his preſent Humour leads him: Nor declaims like *Juvenal* againſt Vices, more like an *Orator*, than a *Philoſopher*. *Perſius* is every where the ſame: True to the *Dogma's* of his Maſter: what he has learnt, he teaches Vehemently; and what he teaches, that he Practices himſelf. There is (ſays *Dryden*) a Spirit of Sincerity in all he ſays: You may eaſily diſcern that he is in Earneſt, and is perſwaded of that truth which he inculcates. In this, ſays *Dryden*, I am of Opinion, that he excels *Horace*, who is commonly in jeaſt, and laughs while he inſtructs: And is equal to *Juvenal*, who was as honeſt and ſerious as *Perſius*, and more he cou'd not be. Dryd. *ibid. pag.* xxxiii.

Franciſcus Petrarcha,

A *Florentine* Poet, Renowned both for *Latin* and *Italian* Poeſie. He was born at *Arezzo*, a City of *Tuſcany*, on the xx*th.* day of *July*, 1304. He was *Arch-Deacon* of *Parma*; and afterwards *Canon* of the *Cathedral* Church at *Padua*. He died ſuddenly of an Apoplexy, on the xix*th.* of *July* 1374.

He wrote many things in *Verſe* as well as in *Proſe*.

Philippus Labbeus, in his *De Scriptoribus Eccleſiaſticis*, ſays, that *Petrarcha* was the moſt Conſiderable Man in that Age, for Wit, Eloquence, and Politeneſs in the *Latin* and *Italian* Languages, as alſo for skill in the *I-*

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talian and *Latin* Poesie; and that *He* was the First, who rais'd Learning out of that *Gothick* darkness, after it had lain buried for many Ages.

Laurentius Pignorius, in his *Symbolæ Epistolicæ*, Epist. III. calls *Petrarch* a Man of very great Learning, and, considering the time he liv'd in, of a most Elegant Style.

Sixtus Senensis, in the fourth Book of his *Bibliotheca Sancta*, tells us, That *Petrarch* was Universally Learned; that he was the first Restorer of the *Latin Tongue*, which had been quite extinct for several Centuries; that *He* was the *First*, and beyond all dispute the *Best*, who wrote *Italian* Poetry; And that among[illegible]he *Latin* Poets he had so good a Character, that in the *Capitol* at *Rome*, by an Universal Approbation, he was chose *Poet Laureat*.

Lilius Gyraldus remarks, That tho' *Petrarch* and *Boccace* (who were of the same Form for *Poetry*) did not shew much of Judgment and Accuracy in their *Poems*; which indeed is chiefly to be ascrib'd to the unhappiness of the Age they liv'd in; yet, says *Gyraldus*, they both seem to have very much of a *Poetical Genius*.

John Boccace, in the Preface to his *Genealogia Deorum*, says, That if any Man living be fit to undertake so great a Work, it is that most excellent Person, *Francis Petrarch*: A Man of a Divine Wit and a never-failing Memory, as also of admirable Eloquence; who is most intimately acquainted with the Histories of all Nations; and is incomparably well skill'd in explaining the *Fables* of the *Ancients*; And, in a word, exactly knowing in all the several Parts of *Philosophy*.

Jacobus Philippus Tomasinus, in his Account of *Petrarch*, calls him, the Darling of the Muses, an Honour to the Ancients, the Delight of Learning, and one

who deserves a perpetual Memory.——This our Poet, says *Tomasinus*, had acquir'd so great a fame and reputation by his Works, that vast Numbers of Learned Men flock'd to him, just as *Bees* do to *Flowers*, to suck the *Hony*. And, indeed, what could be sweeter, or finer than the discourse of this *our Author*, who was so well skill'd in *Latin* and *Greek*, though more elegant in the *Italian*. *Petrarch*, says *Tomasin*, has two ways of attracting and moving his Reader, either by inculcating the Vertues, or else by Rhetorick and softness of Expression. In *Prose*, his Stile is Masculine and Nervous; and in *Verse*, says *Tomasin*, he is full, pure, elaborate, and yet suited to every Man's *Genius*. To conclude, *he* has in all parts wonderful Pleasantness, and great Variety; his Sentences are beautiful, and his Words manly. **Tomasin.** *in* Petrarcha *redivivo*, *Cap.* 1. and *Cap.* 8.

Paulus Vergerius, who writ the Life of *Francis Petrarch*, says, He was a Man of great Knowledge and Learning; and that there was scarce any sort of Learning, fit for a Gentleman, wherein he had not made some considerable Progress.——Of all the Works that *Petrarch* had wrote, *Vergerius* puts the highest Value upon his *Africa*; this Book, he tells us, is full of History, abounds with excellent Rules and Instructions, and contains a great many *Poetical* Fictions. *He* further observes, that *Petrarch* does therein appear to be well skill'd both in the Knowledge of *Antiquity*, and of *Nature*, and that there is a great deal of *Oratory* in it: In short, *he* tells us, That a *Young Man* might glory in being the Author of such a Work, and that an *Old Man* need not be asham'd of it. Though, at the same time, he takes notice of his *Half Verses*, and his *Prosodia* faults: as also some Considerable Omissions in the History of the Second *Punick* War.

Rapin

Rapin has a different opinion concerning the *Africa* of *Petrarch*; into what Enormities, *ſays he*, has *Petrarch* run in his *Africa*; through his Ignorance of *Ariſtotle*'s Rules; and by his following no other Guide, but his own Genius, and Capricious Fancy. **Rap.** *Reflex. on* Ariſt. *&c. Part* 1. *Sect* xi.

Voſſius in his *De Poetis Latinis*, ſtiles *Petrarch*, one of a Divine Wit, and Wonderful Learning.

Joannes Matthæus Toſcanus, in his Account of *Italy*, *Cap.* v. tells us, That *Italy* never brought forth one that was equal to *Petrarch*, nay, nor any wiſe comparable to him.

Eraſmus in *Ciceroniano*, *pag.* 155. calls *Petrarch*, one of a quick and ready Wit, a Man of great Knowedge, and no indifferent Orator. But as *Eraſmus* obſerves, his *Latin* is not ſo pure as one could wiſh, his Style having a Tang of the preceeding Barbarous Age.

Paulus Manutius, in his *Comment* upon the firſt Book, and third Epiſtle of *Cicero* to his Brother *Quintus*, remarks, that *Petrarch* was the moſt Elegant of all the *Italian* Poets, but that he was no very good *Latin* Poet.

Joannes Gobellinus, in the Second Book of his *Commentaries*, concerning Pope *Pius* 11. ſays, whom could we compare to *Franciſcus Petrarcha*, if his *Latin* Works were as good as his *Italian*?

Titus Petronius Arbiter.

A *Roman* Knight, and an Elegant Writer in the time of *Nero*, to whom he was *Master* of the *Revels*. His *Satyricon* mixt of *Prose* and *Verse* together, with several Fragments, is yet extant, though very much maimed and defective in many Places. At the taking of *Alba Græca* in the Year 1688. from the *Turks*, there was found the *Satyricon* of *Petronius*, said to be Perfect and Compleat, and afterwards publish'd by one *Francis Nodotius*, a *French* Gentleman, who is very positive in the asserting it to be Compleat and Perfect; but the truth of this is much question'd, by many of the most Learned.

St. *Euremont* observes in his *Miscellaneous Essays*, That in every part of *Petronius* there appears an admirable pure Stile, as also great delicacy of Thoughts; but that which *he says*, is most surprising to him, is to observe with what ease, and how ingeniously he gives us all sorts of *Characters*. Of all the Ancient Authors *Terence* is generally said to be the best, for hitting the Humours, and Tempers of men: But, says St. *Euremont*, There is this Objection to him, That he has not *extent* enough; And his whole *Talent* goes no further, than to give a true, and natural representation of a *Servant*, an *O'd Man*, a *Covetous Father*, a *Debauch'd Son*, or a *Slave*. This is the utmost of what *Terence* can do. You are not to expect from him any thing of Gallantry, or of Passion, or of the Thoughts, or Discourse of a *Gentleman* But (now) *Petronius* had such an Universal Wit, that he understood the Genius of every Profession, and could turn himself to as many Humours and Tempers, as he had a Mind to. As for instance, if at any time

he

he introduces one who is to *Declaim*, he would be ſure to hit the Air and Style ſo exactly, that one would think he had us'd to *Declaim* all his Life. Never did any thing expreſs more naturally, the Diſorder of a Debauch'd life, than the Quarrels of *Eucolpion* and *Acyltos* upon the Subject of *Giton*.—In a word, ſays St. *Euremont*, There is no Nature, no Temper, no Profeſſion, which *Petronius* doth not admirably purſue the Genius of. He is a *Poet*, he is an *Orator*, he is a Philoſopher, or any thing elſe, as he ſees fit.

Mr. *Richard Wooley*, in the Second *Vol.* of his *Compleat Library*, *Jan.* 1692, *pag.* 101. ſays, that *Petronius* has the Character, as he was a Gentleman, and a *Roman* Knight, to have written in the moſt *Gentleman*-like Stile almoſt of any of that Nation, and with a free, flowing, and unaffected Eloquence, and with a Purity of Language that none in former times exceeded, nor in all things equall'd; nor in after-ages ever came nigh; not only the *Roman Eloquence*, but even the whole Body of that Language degenerating ſoon after into downright *Barbariſm*.

The *ſame Author pag.* 143. acquaints us, That he hears from *Holland*, that ſome *Critical Remarks* are made by ſome ſharp ſcented and ſmart Wits *there*, that ſeem to intimate that the late found Supplements of the *Satyricon* of *Petronius*, ſmell too ſtrong of a *French Author*, to be the *Genuine* Products of *Petronius*; though they confeſs, they are ſo artfully compoſed, if *Fictitious*, that they will puzzle all the *Criticks* in the World to be poſitive in their Deciſions about them. We ſhall only (*ſays Wooley*) mention Two of the Paſſages carped at, with the Exceptions made againſt them. *Firſt* they doubt whether in *Petronius*'s time, the Terms *Agens* and *Patiens* were uſed in an *Obſcene Sence*, as in

one

one of thoſe Supplements: And. *Secondly*, in that expreſſion found in *pag.* 23. *Adeo Sordidus erat Lycurgus, ut, Invitis opibus immenſis, etiam quæ ſunt vitæ neceſſaria, denegaret.* They incline to believe there is a *Galliciſm*, as much Queſtioning whether the *Latins* ever us'd ſuch a form of Speech, as to ſay, That a Covetous Man, *in ſpite of his great Riches*, grudges himſelf *Neceſſaries.*

Lipſius, lib. 1. *Lectionum Antiquarum, cap.* 8. ſays, that *Petronius* was a neat and an Elegant Writer; and, were it not that his *Latin* is ſometimes too good for his Wanton Subjects, in all other reſpects he deſerves to be Commended.

The *ſame Author, lib.* III. *Epiſtolicarum Quæſtionum, Epiſt.* 2. tells *Petrus Pythæus*, There is not among all the *Poets*, a more Beautiful or more agreeable Piece, than *Petronius*'s *Satyricon.* But at the ſame time he takes notice, of the danger there is in reading ſo *obſcene* an Author; though as for himſelf, he brags, he was one of thoſe, upon whom ſuch ſort of *Obſcene* Diſcourſes made no more an Impreſſion, than a *Boat* upon the *Sea.*

Gaſpar Barthius, lib. 50. *Adverſar cap.* 9. *pag.* 2357. remarks, that were it not for the *Obſcenity* of *Petronius*, there never had wrote an Author of greater Beauty, or of greater Elegancy.

Petrus Daniel Huetius, in his *De Origine Fabularum Romanenſium, pag.* 76, 77. calls *Petronius*, the moſt Elegant and Polite Writer of the Age he liv'd in; whoſe *Satyr* was full of Wit and Beauty. *He* alſo ſtiles him, a very great *Critick*; and one of an exquiſite taſte in Learning; but as *Huetius* obſerves, his Stile fell ſomewhat ſhort of the Delicacy of his Judgment: For herein he ſeem'd to be too affected, and too Elaborate, his

Style

Style degenerating from that *Natural* and *Venerable Simplicity*, which belong'd to the happy Age of *Auguſtus.*

Dryden, in his *Eſſay* of *Heroick Plays*, tells us, That *Petronius Arbiter*, was the moſt Elegant, and one of the moſt judicious Authors of the *Latin Tongue*; who had given many Admirable Rules for the Structure, and Beauties of an *Epick* Poem.

He further *obſerves* to us, in his *Dedie.* before *Examen Poeticum*, or, *The Third Part of Miſcellany Poems*, that *Petronius* was the greateſt Wit perhaps of all the *Romans*, yet when his Envy prevail'd upon his Judgment, to fall on *Lucan*, he fell *himſelf* in his Attempt: *He* perform'd worſe in his Eſſay of the Civil War, than the Author of the *Pharſalia*: And, avoiding his Errors, ſays *Dryden*, has made greater of his Own.

Rapin, in the *Advertiſement* to his *Reflexions* of *Ariſtotle* of *Poeſie*, obſerves, That *Petronius* (who no Man of Modeſty dares name, unleſs on the account of thoſe Directions he gave for Writing) amongſt the Ordures of his *Satyre*, gives certain Precepts for *Poetry* that are admirable. *Petronius* was diſguſted at the Stile of *Seneca* and *Lucan*, which to him ſeem'd affected, and contrary to the Principles of *Ariſtotle*. 'Tis at *them* he levels with thoſe Glances, that ſlip from him againſt the *Poetaſters*, and *Falſe Declamators*. Nothing more judicious was writ in thoſe Days, yet (ſays *Rapin*) himſelf had not that eaſie and natural way, which he requires ſo much in Others. *He* gives the beſt Rules in the World againſt Affectation, which he never obſerved himſelf. For he commends even to the *Simplicity* of Style, whereas *his own* is not always *Natural*. To ſay the Truth, *ſays Rapin*, what is good on this Subject,

(*viz.*

(*viz.* his *Precepts* for *Poetry*) is all taken from *Aristotle*; who is the only *Source* whence *good Sense* is to be drawn, when one goes about to Write.

Mrs. *Katherine Philips,*

A Person of that admirable Merit, and Reputation that her Memory will be Honour'd of all Men, that are Favourers of *Poetry*. One, who not only has equall'd all that is reported of the *Poeteſſes* of *Antiquity*, the *Lesbian Sappho*, and the *Roman Sulpitia*, but whoſe Merit has juſtly found her Admirers, amongſt the greateſt Poets of *our Age*. This Incomparable Perſon, to the Regret of all, who were acquainted with her great Worth and Fame, died of the *Small-Pox* on the 22*th.* of *June*, 1664. being but One and Thirty Years of Age, having not left any of her Sex, her Equal in *Poetry*.

All her ſeveral *Poems*, together with her *Tranſlations* of *Monſieur Corneille*'s Tragedies of *Pompey* and *Horace*, and ſeveral other *Tranſlations* out of *French*, are Printed in one Volume *Fol. London*, 1678.

The *Publiſher* of Mrs. *Philips*'s Works ſays, We might well have call'd her The *Engliſh Sappho*, ſhe of all the *Female Poets* of former Ages, being for her Verſes and her Vertues both, the moſt highly to be valued; but *She* has call'd her ſelf *Orinda*, a Name that deſerves to be added to the *Number* of the *Muſes*, and to live with Honour as long as *They*. Were *our* Language as gene-

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rally known to the World as the *Greek* and *Latin* were Anciently, or as the *French* is now, *her Verses* could not be confin'd within the narrow limits of *our Islands*, but would spred Themselves as far as the *Continent* has Inhabitants, or as the *Seas* have any Shore.

What Opinion *Abraham Cowley* had of Mrs. *Katherine Philips*, appears by these following Verses:

Of Female Poets, *who had Names of Old,*
Nothing is shewn, but only told,
And all we hear of them, perhaps may be
Male-Flatt'ry only, and Male-Poetrie.
Few minutes did their Beauties Lightning wast,
The Thunder of their Voice did longer last,
But that *too soon was past.*
The certain proofs of our Orinda's *Wit*
In her own *lasting Characters are Writ,*
And they will long my Praise of them survive,
Though long perhaps that *too may live.*
The Trade of Glory manag'd by the Pen,
Though great it be, and every where is found,
Does bring in but small profit to us Men,
'Tis by the number of the Sharers drown'd;
Orinda *on the* Female *Coasts of Fame,*
Ingrosses all the Goods of a Poetick *Name.*
She does no Partner with her see;
Does all the business there alone, which we
Are forc'd to carry on by a whole Company.

Cowley's Third *Stanza* on the Death of Mrs. *Philips*.

The Earl of *Orrery* was also a high Admirer of the Famous *Orinda*, and particularly commends her *Tran-*

slation of *Corneille's Pompey*, in these following Verses, being part of a *Copy* Addrest to the *Authress*:

You English Corneille's Pompey *with such Flame,*
That you both raise our *Wonder and* his *Fame;*
If he could Read it, he like us would call
The Copy *greater than the* Original:
You cannot mend what is already done,
Unless you'll finish what you have begun:
Who your Translation *sees, cannot but say,*
That 'tis Orinda's Work, *and but* his Play.
The French *to Learn our Language now will seek,*
To hear their Greatest-Wit *more nobly speak;*
Rome *too would grant, were* our Tongue *to* her *known,*
Cæsar *speaks better in't, than in his own.*
And all those Wreaths *once circl'd* Pompey's *Brow,*
Exalt his Fame, *less than* your Verses *now.*

Dryden.

Mrs. *Philips's Horace* Commended.

This Martial Story, which through France *did come,*
And there was wrought in great Corneille's *Loom;*
Orinda's *Matchless Muse to* Brittain *brought,*
And Forreign *Verse, our* English *Accents taught;*
So Soft, that to our shame we understand
They could not fall but from a Lady's *Hand.*
Thus while a Woman Horace *did* Translate,
Horace *did rise above a* Roman *Fate.*

Part of the *Prologue.*

Several others, as the Earl of *Roscommon*, Mr. *Flatman*, and my much esteemed Friend, *James Terrell* Esq; have

have alſo employ'd their Pens in praiſe of the Excellent *Orinda.*

Pindarus,

A *Theban Poet*, chief of the *Lyricks.* He was Contemporary with *Æſchylus*, and began to Flouriſh about the Seventy Sixth *Olympiad.* The *Dialect* he us'd, was the *Dorick*, with a ſmall mixture of the *Æolick.*

His *Odes* are yet extant; beſides which he is ſaid to have Written *Tragedies*, *Hymns*, *Pæans*, *Dithyrambs*, *Epicks*, *Epigrams*, and other *Poems*, in all ſeventeen Diſtinct Works.

He died about the 66. or, as ſome ſay, the 80. Year of his Age, in the 86. *Olympiad.*

Pindar was ſo highly eſteem'd by *Alexander*, that at the overthrow of *Thebes*, he cauſed *his* Houſe and Family only to be preſerv'd.

Diogenes Laertius tells us, that *Arceſilaus*, the Philoſopher, was wont to ſay of *Pindar*, That he fill'd the Mouth with a noble Sound, and afforded a plentiful Variety of Names and Words.

Horace, lib. iv. *Odarum, Od.* 2. ſays, That no Man could imitate, or come up to *Pindar*; and that whoever ſhould attempt it, would certainly find himſelf as much diſappointed, as the bold *Icarus* in the *Fable*, who undertaking to flie with Wings, whoſe Feathers were faſten'd together with Wax, fell into the *Sea*, and was drown'd.

He further *adds*, that *Pindar*, in respect of his Profound Eloquence, may very properly be resembl'd to a *Torrent*, or a *Stream*, that runs down with great violence from the top of a high Hill, and which the Rains have caus'd to swell, and to over-flow its Banks; and that one may as easily put a stop to the rapid Current of such a *Stream*, as to Circumscribe, or Limit *Pindar*'s impetuous Style. To conclude, *Horace* is of the Opinion, That whatsoever this *Divine Poet* does, he still deserves *New Laurels*; that is to say, whether he fills his Lawless *Dytherambicks* with new Words, and that he does not tye himself to any Rule either in his *Numbers*, or *Cadences*, or, that he sings the Praises of the *Gods*, of *Kings*, or of *Heroes*.

Quintilian, lib. x *cap.* 1. says, That of all the Nine *Lirick Poets*, *Pindar* was beyond all dispute the most considerable, take him either for his Vast *Genius*, for the beauty of his Sentences and his Figures, for the abundance of his Thoughts, and the agreeable variety of his Expressions; and that in respect of his great Eloquence, which Flows like a *Torrent*, *Horace* might very well think it was impossible for any Man ever to imitate him.

Rapin, in his *Reflections* on *Aristotle*'s Book of *Poesie*, *part* 2. *sect.* xxx. remarks, That *Pindar* is Great in his Designs, Vast in his Thoughts, bold in his Imaginations, Happy in his Expressions, and Eloquent in his Discourse: But (as *Rapin* observes) his great Vivacity hurries him sometimes past his Judgement, he gives himself too much Swing; his *Panegyricks* are perpetual Digressions, where, rambling from his Subject, he carries the Reader from Fable to Fable, from Allusion to Allusion, and from one *Chimera* to another; for he has the most unbridled and irregular *Fancy* in the *World*. But this *Irregularity*, says *Rapin*, is one part of the Character of the *Ode*,

the

the Nature and Genius of it requiring *Tranſport*. *Pindar* likewiſe is the only Perſon amongſt the *Greeks*, that got any Reputation by this ſort of Writing, for little is remaining of the other *Lyricks*.

Tanneguy le Fevre, in his *Abridgement* of the *Lives* of the *Greek Poets*, tells us, that the Figures which *Pindar* uſes, are noble and great; but, that they have ſometimes the Air of the *Dithyrambick*, that is to ſay, they are bold and raſh, which is by no means agreeable to ſuch as love a *Correct* Style. *He adds*, that *Pindar* is a grave and ſerious Author; but that he loves a little too much that which they call *Sentences*; that he very often loſes his Subject, by Reaſon of his long Digreſſions; and that after he has been upon the Ramble, he returns all of a ſudden, when one leaſt expects him; and at his Re-entry, he never uſes any thing of Ceremony, that is to ſay, he takes no manner of care, to make any Connection betwixt his firſt Thoughts, and that which is to follow.

Voſſius, in his *De Arte Poeticâ*, *pag.* 24. ſays, That *Pindar* us'd to brag, that *Nature* was the only *Guide he* followed in *Poetry*; whereas *others* made uſe of *Art*, the Rules whereof he ne'er minded, nor regarded: In which reſpect, he was wont to compare *himſelf* to the *Eagle*, and *other Poets* to *Ravens*.

The *ſame Author*, *lib.* 2. *Inſtitutionum Poeticarum*, *pag.* 75. obſerves, That *Pindar* took too much delight in *Metaphors*, and Lofty Expreſſions; but this fault, ſays *Voſſius*, he ought to be pardon'd, ſince he thought it more glorious, to get now and then a fall, than to be always groveling upon the Ground.

The Lord *Bacon*, in his *Advancement* of *Learning*, *lib.* 8. *cap.* 1. takes notice, That to *Pindar* it is peculiar ſuddenly to ſtrike, as it were, with a Divine Scepter, the Minds of Men by rare ſhort Sentences.

And

And in *his* Hiſtory of Life and Death, he calls *Pindar*, a Poet of a high Fancie, ſingular in his Conceits, and a great adorer of the *Gods.*

Gaſpar Barthius calls *Pindar* an Ingenious Authhor, and one who had an indifferent good ſtock of Learning. *lib.* 39. *Adverſar. cap.* xiii.

And *Voſſius*, in his *De Hiſt. Lat. pag.* 819. declares, that he well enough approves of this Character given by the Learned *Barthius* concerning *Pindar.*

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 2. remarks, That there is in *Pindar*, a great many Words not to be found any where elſe; but, that he ſought not for them, but took them as they were then us'd, and as they naturally offer'd themſelves; whereas *Nicander* and *Callimachus* made it their buſineſs, to hunt after the moſt obſcure, and improper Words, to make uſe of.

Marcus Accius Plautus,

A *Comical* Poet, born at *Sarſina*, a City in *Italy*, who having ſpent all on *Players* Apparel, was fain for his living to ſerve a Baker in turning a Hand-Mill. At leiſure hours he made his *Plays.* He died the firſt Year of the 149*th. Olympiad*, being 184 Years before *Chriſt.*

Several of his *Works* are loſt, but we have yet remaining Twenty of his *Comedies.*

The

The Ancient *Criticks* could by no means agree, concerning the true Number of *Plautus's Comedies*; ſome reckoning them to be 21. Others 25. Others 40. nay, ſome advance them to 100. and ſome to 130. But the ground and occaſion of this Difference, is generally thought to proceed from the mixing the Works of other *Comical* Poets, with thoſe of *this Author*, and particularly the Comedies of one *Plautius*, whoſe Name being ſo very like that of *Plautus*, might very well be the Cauſe of ſuch a Miſtake.

Aulus Gellius, *lib.* vii. *cap.* 17. *Noct. Attic.* calls *Plautus*, the moſt Elegant of all the *Latin* Authors, and an abſolute Maſter of that Language.

Varro was ſo taken with *Plautus*, that he ſays, if the *Muſes* were to ſpeak *Latin*, they would certainly uſe his very Stile.

Tully, in his firſt Book *De Officiis*, highly commends *Plautus's* Ingenious and Facetious way of *Raillery*.

Macrobius, in the Second Book of his *Saturnalia*, *cap.* 1. tells us, That the two moſt Eloquent Perſons of all the *Ancients*, were *Plautus*, and *Tully*; and that *theſe two* excell'd all others in an Elegant way of *Raillery*.

Cardinal Bona, in his *Notitia Auctorum*, calls *Plautus*, The *Tenth Muſe*; The exact Rule of the *Roman* Language; and the Father of Eloquence.

Ludovicus Vives, in his *Comment* upon St. *Auguſtine's De Civitate Dei*, *lib.* 2. *cap.* 9. ſays, That no Poet had a greater Vogue than *Plautus*, not only in his own life time, but in the Age following.

And *Tanaquillus Faber*, in his Second Book, *Epiſt.* 32. ſtiles *Plautus*, The very Fountain of pure *Latin*.

Lipſius,

Lipſius, in the Fifth Book of his *Epiſtolicæ Queſtiones*, *Epiſt.* 26. remarks, That among the *Comical* Poets none was to be preferr'd before *Plautus*; for in *him* we meet with not only purity of Stile, and Excellent Language; but *he* alſo affords us a great deal of Wit, Raillery, and pretty Conceits, beſides that *Attick* Elegancy, which one may look for long enough in the reſt of the *Roman Authors*, and never find.

Jacobus Crucius, in his third Book of *Epiſtles*, *Epiſt. ad Franciſc. Leeuvium*, tells us, That never any thing was more pure, more elegant, and, in a Word, better skill'd in the *Latin Tongue*, than *Plautus*. So that if the *Muſes* would have ſpoke *Latin*, they would (undoubtedly) have us'd *his Style*; all the Flower and Elegancy of the *Roman Language* being Comprehended in him. And, he further ſays, That as he muſt be a *Man of Parts*, who rightly underſtands the Elegancies of *Plautus*; ſo none but a *thick ſcul'd Block-head* will pretend to find fault with *Plautus*, who writes the beſt *Latin* of any of the *Roman Authors*. But yet, ſays *Crucius*, there is one thing you muſt be advertiſed of. Have a care, when you read *Plautus* and *Terence*, of propoſing to your ſelf to follow them in every thing. For they do ſometimes make uſe of *Old*, *Obſolete Words*, which if you carry but one foot from the *Theater*, they'll not keep, but ſtink immediately.

Voſſius, in the Fourth Book of his *Inſtitut. Orator. pag.* 29. obſerves to us, That in *Plantus*'s time, thoſe *Archaiſms*, or *Old Antique Words*, which we meet with in *this Poet*, were in no wiſe unbecomeing an *Orator*. For this was then the mode, or way of Speaking. But in *Cicero*'s Age, the faſhion was quite alter'd, and theſe *Old*, *Antique* Words, were wholly laid aſide.

Rapin,

Rapin, in his *Reflex.* on *Ariſtotle's* Book of *Poeſie*, *part* 2. *ſect.* xxvi. ſays, That *Plautus* is ingenious in his Deſigns, happy in his Imaginations, fruitful in his Invention; Yet, that there are ſome Inſipid Jeſts, that eſcape from him in the *taſte* of *Horace*; and his *good ſayings* that make the People laugh, make ſometimes the honeſter ſort to pity him: 'Tis true, obſerves *Rapin*, he ſays the beſt things in the World; and yet very often he ſays the moſt wretched; this a Man is ſubject to, when he endeavours to be too witty; he will make laughter by extravagant Expreſſions, and *Hyperboles*, when he cannot be ſucceſsful to make it by *Things*. *Plautus* is not altogether ſo regular in the *Contrivance* of his Pieces, nor in the *Diſtribution* of the Acts; but he is more *ſimple* in his *Subjects*; For the *Fables* of *Terence* are ordinarily *Compounded*, as is ſeen in the *Andria*, which contains two *Loves*. This is what was objected to *Terence*, that he made one *Latin* Comedy of two *Greek*, the more to animate his *Theatre*. But then the *Plots* are more naturally *unravell'd*, than thoſe of *Plautus*; as thoſe of *Plautus* are more natural than thoſe of *Ariſtophanes*.

Eraſmus, in the 28*th*. Book of his *Epiſtles*, *Epiſt.* 20. is of the Opinion, that there is more exact Judgment in *one* Comedy of *Terence*, than in the *ſeveral* Comedies of *Plautus*, put them all together.

Voſſius, in the Second Book of his *Inſtitutiones Poeticæ*, remarks, That *Plautus* has ſurpaſs'd *Terence*, not only in the variety of his Subjects, but alſo in his various Phraſes. But yet he is of the Opinion of thoſe, who think that many of *Plautus's Jeſts* are flat and inſipid; and that in his *Railleries* he is often cold and languid, nay ſometimes obſcene and ridiculous. And *Voſſius* further tells us, that *Plautus* deſerv'd not ſo

much Commendation as *Terence*, in that *his* aim and deſign was, to pleaſe the *People* in *general*, without any manner of diſtinction; whereas all that *Terence* deſir'd, was, to gain the Approbation of *Some Few*, who were moſt conſiderable both for Wit and Honeſty. *Voſſius* alſo obſerves, That *Plautus* is neither ſo prudent, nor ſo exact as *Terence*, in that he introduces more than four Perſons at once upon the Stage, all ſpeaking at the ſame time; which is a thing never done by *Terence*. In a word, *Plautus* (ſays *Voſſius*) has committed a great many faults upon all occaſions, but particularly when he is to repreſent either the Characters of Perſons, or the ſeveral Motions of different Paſſions.

Julius Scaliger, in his Third Book *De Poeticâ*, *pag.* 437. ſays, That the liberty which *Plautus* took ought to be noted: For he ventur'd at any thing, provided he could but move and affect his *Auditory*, either by making them laugh, or by introducing ſome *New Thing*, or Coining ſome *New Word*.

Hence therefore *Cælius Rhodiginus*, in the 13*th*. Book of his *Lectiones Antiquæ*, *cap.* 23. calls *Plautus*, a *Second Africa*, for that he does very often produce ſomewhat that is *New*, and alſo abounds with great *Monſtroſities*.

Julius Scaliger, alſo in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, *pag.* 766. ſeems to be much diſſatisfied with the the *Titles* of ſeveral of *Plautus*'s Comedies; as for inſtance, the *Rudens*, he ſays, ſhould rather have been call'd *Tempeſtas*; the *Trinummus*, which Word is but once us'd in all the whole Comedy, might more properly have been Entituled, *Theſaurus*; and the *Truculentus*, (which ſounds great, and rather raiſes the Expectation, than anſwers it,) ſhould with more reaſon have bore the Title of *Ruſticus*.

Sextus

Sextus Aurelius Propertius,

AN *Elegiac* Poet, born at *Mevania*, a Town in *Umbria*, under the Reign of *Augustus*.

His four Books of *Elegies*, which is all that remains of him, are commonly publish'd with the Poems of *Catullus* and *Tibullus*. His Mistress, whom he makes the Subject of his Wit, was one *Hostia*, whom he calls *Cynthia*.

He was in great favour with *Cornelius Gallus*, and *Mecænas*. He died after *Virgil*, and before *Horace*.

Borrichius, in his *Dissertat. Acad. De Poetis, pag.* 52. says, That *Propertius*, as himself confesses, copy'd after *Philetas*, *Mimnermus*, and *Callimachus*, *Greek* Poets; and, as *Borrichius* observes, he was very happy in the *imitating* such noble *Originals*; though in one respect his *Verse* was somewhat defective, *viz.* in making his *Pentameter* generally end with a word of *many Syllables*. See even his very first *Distich:*

Cynthia *prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis*
Contactum nullis ante cupidinibus.

Lilius Gyraldus tells us, That *Propertius* left four Books of *Elegies*, which are both Polite, and Learned. *Hofman*, in his *Lexicon*, calls *Propertius*, The chief (by far) of all the *Elegiac* Poets.

And *Quintilian, lib.* X. *cap.* 1. at the same time he so highly commends *Tibullus*, saith, There were yet Those who give *Propertius* the Preference.

Rolandus Mareſius, in his Second Book, *Epiſt.* 6. ſays Tho' it may be thought a piece of Confidence in him to contradict that judicious *Critick*, *Quintilian*, who ſeems to prefer *Tibullus*; yet, for my part, *ſays he*, I own I am one of Thoſe, who give the preference to *Propertius*. For although *Tibullus* be wonderfully Pleaſant and Elegant, and much more correct in the *Latin* Tongue, than the *other*, (who often imitates the *Greek* Poets,) and is alſo more curious and exact in his *Verſe*; yet *Propertius* ſeems to ſurpaſs him in Learning, and alſo in Sweetneſs of Temper, ſo very obliging and good Natur'd is he: But, as *Mareſius* obſerves, though *Propertius* was of ſuch a ſweet, calm Temper, yet ſometimes he expreſſes his Paſſions, with as much Heat and Vehemency, as the hotteſt Lover of them all.

Turnebus, in the Eleventh Book of his *Adverſaria*, *cap.* 15. obſerves to us, That the *Verſes* of *Propertius* are ſo pleaſant and delightful, that one would almoſt think, the Muſes themſelves dictated them to the Poet. Only, ſays *Turnebus*, I could wiſh, he had employ'd his moſt curious, fine Fancy, upon ſome other Subject, than that of *Love*; that ſo, he might be read by *Youth* with greater ſafety, than now he can.

Caſpar Barthius, in the Ninth Book of his *Adverſaria*, *cap.* x. remarks, That amongſt all the *Ancients* there is not any Writer, that has a ſweeter ſort of Learning, nor (as he expreſſes it) a more Learned ſort of ſweetneſs, than *Propertius*; which Author, ſays *Barthius*, the better you are acquainted with, the more you will love him: For even thoſe things, which at firſt ſight may ſeem the moſt obſcure, will, after you have once ſearch'd into them, by a certain natural beauty, appear to be the moſt delightful and agreeable.

The

The *same Author*, *lib.* 32. *cap.* 9. calls *Propertius*, a most Ingenious, a most Accurate, and a most Learned Writer; and one who was incomparably well skill'd in, as well as a true Lover of, the *Greek Elegancies*.

Lipsius, in the Second Book of his *Antiquæ Lectiones*, *cap.* x. tells us, That He who loveth not *Propertius*, can never be a Favourite of the *Muses*. For so great a *Sweetness* is there in his *Verses*, that, as the *Comical* Poet observes, *Nil nisi mulsa loquitur*, *Every word in them seems to be mixt with Honey*. And so full of Learning are they, that we are apt to think, says *Lipsius*, They were dictated even by *Apollo* himself.

Rapin, in his *Reflex.* on *Aristotle's* Book of *Poesie*, *part* 2*d*. *sect.* 29. says, That they who have writ Elegy best amongst the *Latins*, are *Tibullus*, *Propertius*, and *Ovid*. *Tibullus*, says *Rapin*, is Elegant and polite; *Propertius* noble and high; but *Ovid* is to be preferr'd to both; because he is more natural, more moving, and more passionate; and thereby he has better express'd the Character of *Elegy*, than the others.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, *pag.* 854. takes notice, That *Propertius* has an easie, natural *Air*; and that he has very well express'd the Character of *Elegy*; that in his Opinion, *Propertius* is more Polite and Elegant, than the *Criticks* generally allow him to be; tho' he must own, he did affect Things out of the Common Road.

He further *observes*, That *Propertius* was somewhat particular in the mixing *Fables* (upon every occasion) with his *Verse*, (he looking upon *Fable* to be the very Soul of *Poetry*,) tho' he did therein follow the same Counsel, which the famous *Corinna* once gave to *Pindar*. And in this respect is it, says *Vossius* in the third

Book

Book of his *Institutiones Poeticæ*, *pag.* 35. that *Propertius* had the advantage of *Tibullus*; because nothing adds more to the luster of an *Elegy*, than *Historical Stories* and *Fables.*

Lipsius, in the third Book of his *Variæ Lectiones*, *cap.* vii. remarks, That there is a great deal of abstruse Learning in *Propertius*, and, that besides the Elegancy and Acuteness of his *Sentences*, there are many things even in his very *Words*, which deserve both our notice, and our praise. One thing indeed is very *new*, and I cannot tell, says *Lipsius*, whether the like can be found in any other Author, and that is, his peculiar way of using the *Simple Verbs* instead of the *Compounds*, and out of a strange Opinion of the *Elegancy*, giving the *Simple Verbs* the very same Signification, that the *Compound Verbs* ought to have; which he does often do. But to make the thing yet plainer, says *Lipsius*, I will give you an example, or two. Thus you shall find in this Poet, the Verb *Sectari* us'd for *Insectari*; as also *Testari* for *Detestari*; which is contrary to all other Authors. And many other Instances of the like nature may be found in *this Author*; which whoever is ignorant of, says *Lipsius*, may happen often to be plung'd in reading *Propertius.*

Aurelius

Aurelius Prudentius Clemens,

A *Christian Poet*, Born at *Saragosa* a City in *Spain*, in the Year 348. He was at First by his Profession an *Advocate*, or *Lawyer*; but afterwards he was advanc'd by the Emperour *Honorius* to very considerable Preferment. When he was Fifty Seven Years of Age, he retir'd, and applied himself Chiefly to the Writing *Divine Poems*. There is no certain Account of his Death, tho' some pretend to say it was in the Year 412.

He Wrote in *Latin* Verse *Psychomachia*, *De Martyrum Coronis*, and some other Works which are yet Extant.

Petrus Crinitus, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, says, That *Prudentius*'s Poems were Writ in several sorts of Verse: Whereby it plainly appears, that, considering the time he Liv'd in, he was the most to be valu'd of all the *Christian Poets*, not only for his Learned Figurative Expressions, but also for his Grave, and Weighty Sentences.

Sidonius Apollinaris, no Contemptible Author, (*says Crinitus*) makes no Scruple to joyn *Prudentius* to *Horace*.

Bellarmin, in his *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, says, That *Prudentius* Wrote Incomparable Verse.

Cardinal *Bona*, in his *Notitia Actorum*, calls *Prudentius*, The most sweet *Christian Pindar*, and in Allusion to his Name, The most *Prudent Christian Poet*.

Joseph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. calls *Prudentius*, a good *Poet*.

And

And in *Scaligerana* 2. *pag.* 51. he Stiles him, an Elegant *Poet.*

Caspar Barthius, in the Eighth Book of his *Adversaria*, *cap.* 11. says, That never any Man Wrote more Divinely of Matters relating to the *Christians*, than *Prudentius.*

Vossius also, in his *De Historicis Latinis*, tells us, That *Prudentius* has done great Service to the *Christian History*, by what he has writ concerning the Sufferings of several *Martyrs*: 'Tis true, says *Vossius*, he wrote in *Verse*; but for all that, such as handle this Subject in *Prose*, are wont to fetch the true Matter of Fact from this our Poet.

Lilius Gyraldus assures us, That *Prudentius* was a Person of very great Learning, but of no Eloquence; which, as *Gyraldus* thinks, he altogether neglected; since the only thing he minded, was, the advancement of True, *Christian* Piety.

Gaspar Barthius, in his 27*th.* Book of the *Adversaria*, *cap.* v. says, That *Prudentius* contains a Treasure of Curious, delicate Things, and that we ought not to pass him by, as a Common Ordinary Poet.

And the *same Author*, *lib.* 21. *cap.* 4. informs us, That the true reason, why *Prudentius* is less Elegant in some places than in others, was his imitating *Holy Writ*, and that then he did voluntarily alter his Style: But, that besides this, he was often forc'd to transcribe the Writings of the *Monks*, who generally wrote in a barbarous Style; and this was that, which chiefly occasion'd the breaking his Stile, and caus'd him to write otherwise, than else he would.

Hofman, in his *Lexicon*, tells us, That *Prudentius*, when he was 57 Years of Age, began to write in *Verse* concerning

concerning *Ecclesiastical Matters*, which he perform'd both Learnedly and Elegantly, unless it were, that sometimes, in *Forreign words*, and especially in the *Greek*, he minded not the *Quantity* of *Syllables*, when yet the *Greek Inscriptions*, or *Titles* of his Books, do plainly shew, that He understood *Greek* well enough.

Borrichius, in his *Dissert. Acad. De Poetis*, *pag.* 72. affirms, That *Prudentius*, for Eloquence, Piety, and Learning, transcended the *Genius* of the Age; and that his *Verses*, bating their *false Quantities*, are for the most part smooth, lofty, and Majestick.

Gaspar Scioppius, in his *Consultationes*, *pag.* 43. says, That *Prudentius* is (indeed) a tolerable Poet, but sometimes he is led away with the Custom of the Age; and at other times he runs too much upon old, Antique Words, and imitates *Lucretius* too much.

Ellies du Pin, in the Third Tome of his *New Bibliotheque* of *Ecclesiastical Authors*, remarks, That *Prudentius* is no very good Poet; that his Expressions are often Barbarous, and very different from that pure Style, which was us'd in the Age of *Augustus*. His Thoughts, or Notions, says *du Pin*, are Excellent, and altogether becoming a good *Christian*. There are some places Elegantly written, and pleasant enough to be read.

Renatus Rapin,

A Jeſuite, born at *Tours* in *France*, 1621. A Critical Judge of the *Poets*, as appears by his *Reflexions* on *Ariſtotle*'s Treatiſe of *Poetry*, and a Poet alſo himſelf of no Obſcure Fame by his *Latin* Poem of †*Horticulture* or *Gardening*, which hath been moſt ingeniouſly Tranſlated into *Engliſh*, by my Kinſman, *John Evelin*, the younger.

† *Dryden*, in his *Apology* for *Heroick Poetry*, ſays, That *Rapin*, were all other *Criticks* loſt, is alone ſufficient to teach anew the Rules of *Writing*.

Oldham, in the *Advertiſement* before his Imitation of *Horace*'s Art of *Poetry*, tells us, That *Rapin* is one of the beſt *Criticks*, which theſe latter Ages have produc'd.

Rimer, in his Preface to *Rapin*'s *Reflexions* on *Ariſtotle* of *Poeſie*, informs us, That *Rapin* is as well known amongſt the *Criticks*, as *Ariſtotle* to the *Philoſophers*: Never Man gave his Judgment ſo generally, and never was Judgment (ſays *Rimer*) more free and impartial. He might be thought an Enemy to the *Spaniards*, were he not as ſharp on the *Italians*; and he might be ſuſpected to envy the *Italians*, were he not as ſevere on his own *Country-Men*.

Certainly, ſays *Monſieur Baillet*, in the *Jugemens des Sçavans*, That Man muſt be altogether void of Common Senſe, and alſo of that light which diſtinguiſhes a Man from a *Beaſt*, who can in the leaſt queſtion, whether *Rapin* was a great Poet, after he has once ſeen his *Eglogues*, his four Books of *Gardening*, his

two

two Books of *Heroick Poems*, his *Elegies*, and his *Odes*.

Borrichius, *pag.* 117. tells us, That all the *Eglogues* of *Rapin*, both *Sacred* and *Profane*, were writ with exquisite Judgment.

Monsieur de la Roque, in the *Journal des Scavans*, *Tome* x. *pag.* 124. remarks, That although the *Eglogues* were not esteem'd the most considerable of *Rapin's Poems*, yet one might discern in them a certain *Air* of that *secret* and *conceal'd loftiness*, which *Virgil* has dispers'd in his *Eglogues*.

The same *De la Roque*, *pag.* 126. observes, That *Rapin* in his *Elegies* chose rather to take the Character of *Ovid*, than that of *Tibullus* or *Propertius*; because He is much more just in his Designs, and in his Relating Matters he is fuller of Circumstances; although the *Other Two* have written with greater Elegancy, and with an *Air* that is more harmonious, and more agreeable to *Verse*.

And as for his Odes, *De la Roque* tells us, That *Rapin* has mixt to some of his *Heroick* Subjects others that are soft and tender, that so he might follow *both* the *Characters* of that Kind, which are the *Delicate* and the *Sublime*.

And *De la Roque*, *pag.* 124, 125. of the same *Journal*, informs us, That *Rapin* in his Poem of *Gardening*, has excell'd himself. All the World, *says he*, owns, never any Man came so near *Virgil*, and that *Rapin* was the only Person, who could make us any amends, for what we might have expected, of this Kind, from the famous *Virgil*. Nay, *De la Roque* tells us expressly, that *Rapin* has the very Spirit of *Virgil* in his *Idea's*, in his *Expressions*, in his *Figures*, and particularly in his *Transitions*, just

juſt as *Virgil* had imitated the *Tranſitions* of *Lucretius*, to expreſs *himſelf* by.

Sallo d'Hedouville, in the *Journal des Sçavans*, *Febr.* 9. 1665. is alſo a great Admirer of *Rapin*'s Poem of *Gardening*. He tells us, that this Holy Father, *Rapin*, has ſo ingenious a way of mixing *Fable* to the moſt curious *Reſearches* of *Philoſophy*; and that he has handled this Subject of *Gardening*, in ſo pleaſant and agreeable a manner, that we have not now much reaſon to be concern'd, that *Virgil* had left his Work of the *Georgicks* imperfect in this particular, ſince we ſee *Rapin* hath ſo happily ſupply'd this Defect.

The *German Criticks* at *Lipſick*, in the *Acta Eruditorum*, *Decemb.* 1684. *pag.* 560. calls *Rapin*, a Perſon of moſt Exquiſite Learning, and one that was wonderfully expert in reading Ancient Authors.

Monſieur de Segrais, in the *Preface* to his *Tranſlation* of *Virgil*, ſays, That *Rapin* is not only a good Judge of *Poetry*, but alſo an Excellent Poet too.

The Earl of *Rocheſter.*

John Wilmot Earl of *Rocheſter*, Viſcount *Athlone* in *Ireland*, and Baron of *Adderbury* in *Oxfordſhire*, was Born at *Dichley* near *Woodſtock* in the ſaid County, *April* —1648. He Died in the *Rangers Lodge* in *Woodſtock-Park*, on the 26*th.* of *July*, 1680.

Dr. *Burnet*, in his Account of the Life and Death of this Noble Lord, *pag.* 7, 8. ſays, He had a ſtrange Vivacity

city of Thought, and Vigour of Expreſſion: His Wit had a Subtility and Sublimity both, that were ſcarce imitable. His Style was Clear and Strong: When he uſed Figures, they were very Lively, and yet far enough out of the Common Road: He had made himſelf Maſter of the Ancient and Modern Wit, and of the Modern *French* and *Italian*, as well as the *Engliſh*. He lov'd to Talk and Write of *Speculative Matters*, and did it with ſo fine a Thread, that even thoſe who hated the Subjects that his Fancy ran upon, yet could not but be charm'd with his way of Treating of them. *Boileau* among the *French*, and *Cowley* among the *Engliſh* Wits, were thoſe he admired moſt. Sometimes other mens thoughts mixt with his Compoſures, but that flow'd rather from the Impreſſions they made on him when he Read them, by which they came to return upon him as his own Thoughts; than that he ſervilely copied from any. For few Men ever had a bolder flight of Fancy, more ſteadily govern'd by Judgment, than he had; no wonder, ſays *Burnet*, a Young Man ſo made, and ſo improv'd, was very acceptable in a Court.

He laid out his Wit (*pag.* 14.) very freely in *Libels* and *Satyrs*, in which he had a peculiar Talent of mixing his Wit with his Malice, and fitting both with ſuch apt words, that Men were tempted to be pleas'd with them: From thence his *Compoſures* came to be eaſily known, for few had ſuch a way of tempering theſe together as he had; ſo that when any thing extraordinary that way came out, as a Child is Father'd ſometimes by its Reſemblance, ſo was it laid at his door, as its Parent and Author.

The *Anonymous* Writer of the *Preface* before *Valentinian*, tells us, That what moſt of all deſerves admiration in my Lord *Rocheſter*, was his *Poetry*, which alone is Subject enough for perpetual *Panegyrick*. But the Character of

of it is so generally known; it has so Eminently distinguish'd it self from that of other men, by a Thousand irresistible Beauties; every Body is so well acquainted with it, by the effect it has had upon them, that to trace and single out the several *Graces*, may seem a Task as Superfluous, as to describe to a *Lover* the *Lines* and *Features* of his *Mistress*'s Face. 'Tis sufficient to observe, that his *Poetry* like *himself*, was all *Original*, and has a Stamp so particular, so unlike any thing that has been Writ before, that as it disdain'd all Servile Imitation, and Copying from others, so neither is it capable (in the Opinion of *this Author*) of being Copy'd, any more than the manner of his Discourse could be Copy'd; the Excellencies are too many and too Masterly: On the other side, the Faults are few, and those inconsiderable; their Eyes must be better than Ordinary, who can see the Minute Spots, with which so Bright a Jewel is stain'd, or rather set off, for those it has, are of the kind, which, *Horace* says, can never Offend.

——— *Quas aut incuria fudit;*
Aut humana parùm cavit Natura.

Such little Negligences as Humanity cannot be exempt from, and such as perhaps were necessary to make his Lines run Natural and Easie; for as nothing is more disagreeable either in *Verse* or *Prose* than a slovenly looseness of Style; so on the other hand too nice a Correctness will be apt to *deaden* the *Life*, and make the *Piece* too *Stiff*; between these two *Extreams*, is the just Character of my Lord *Rochester*'s *Poetry* to be found.

Anthony Wood, in the second Volume of *Athenæ Oxonienses*, *pag.* 489. says, That *Andrew Marvell*, who was a good Judge of Wit, did use to say, That *Rochester was*

the

the only Man in England, *that had the true Vein of* Satyr. He was (says *Wood*) a Person of most rare Parts, and his Natural Talent was Excellent, much improv'd by Learning and Industry, being throughly acquainted with all the *Closset Authors*, both *Greek* and *Latin*; a thing very rare (if not peculiar to him) among those of his Quality. *He* knew also how to use them, not as other *Poets* have done, to Transcribe and Steal from, but rather to better and improve them by his Natural Fancy.

But notwithstanding the many Excellencies of this *Noble Poet*, yet that which was no small Blemish to some of his *Poems*, was his *Immodest* and *Obscene Expressions*; since there is no sort of *Dress* does so ill become *true Poetry*, as that of *Obscenity*.

Here, *as in all things else, is most unfit,*
Bare Ribaldry, *that* poor *pretence to Wit;*
Such Nauseous Songs *by a late Author made,*
Call an unwilling *Censure on his Shade.*
Not that warm Thoughts of the Transporting Joy,
Can Shock the Chastest, *or the* Nicest *Cloy*;
But Obscene *Words, too gross to move desire,*
Like Heaps *of* Fewel *do but* choak *the Fire.*
On other Themes *He well deserves our Praise,*
But palls that Appetite he meant to raise.

Mulgr. Essay on *Poetry*.

Jacobus

Jacobus Sannazarius, otherwiſe call'd *Actius Sincerus*,

BOrn at *Naples*, *Anno Dom.* 1458. A *Poet* of very great Fame and Reputation for *Latin* Verſe, gain'd by his Poem *De Partu Virginis*, his Piſcatory *Eclogues*, *Epigrams*, &c. He died in the Year 1530.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. calls *Sannazarius*, a *Poet* of great Elegancy, one of an Excellent Invention, and who (as he tells us) is very well worth our Reading.

Boiſſardus, in his *Icones Virorum Illuſtrium*, ſays, That *Sannazarius* was, in reſpect of his great Elegancy and Learning, to be compar'd with any of the *Ancients*.

Ludovicus de la Cerda, in his *Comment* upon the 734*th.* Verſe of the 7*th.* Book of *Virgil's Æneids*, is of Opinion, That *Sannazarius* did not only ſurpaſs all the *Poets* of his time, but alſo, that he contributed more to the Glory and Reputation of the City of *Naples*, than ever *Statius Papinius* did formerly.

Borrichius, in his *Diſſertationes Academicæ de Poetis*, *pag.* 105. tells us, That *Sannazarius*, of *Naples*, carried the *Latin Poeſie* to a great height; and that in reſpect of nobleneſs of fancy, as alſo for imitating the Beſt of the *Ancients*, for *Poetical* Fictions, and for Acuteneſs, there have been ſcarce Any ſince his time, who have gone beyond him. *He ſays*, that *Sannazarius* lies buried at *Pauſilypum* (about three Miles from *Naples*) cloſe by *Virgil*; it being but reaſonable, that as they were Men

of

of equal Skill, and who affected the very ſame ſort of Learning, ſo even in their *Graves* they ſhould not be at any great diſtance, *one* from the *other*.

He further *remarks*, That never any thing was more *Correct* than *Sannazarius*'s Verſe, as appears by that moſt Excellent *Epick* Poem of his, *De Partu Virginis*, compris'd in three Books. In a word, ſays *Borrichius*, there is nothing that *Sannazarius* has writ, but what very well deſerves to be read, and that with the greateſt Attention, by all who ſtudy and affect *Poetry*; ſo incomparably well does he write upon any Subject: To conclude, his *Eclogues* are polite; his *Elegies* are eaſie and run well; and his *Epigrams* are Ingenious, and without any force, or conſtraint.

Eraſmus, in *Ciceroniano*, *pag.* 205. ſays, That *Accius Sincerus* was wonderfully happy in his Poem *De Partu Virginis* for which he receiv'd prodigious Applauſe from the *Roman Theatre*; and that even two *Popes*, *viz. Leo* x. and *Clement 7th* had (each of Them) writ him a Letter of Complements, to congratulate him thereupon.

In this reſpect, ſays *Eraſmus*, is *Accius Sincerus* to be preferr'd before his Predeceſſor *Pontanus*, for that *he* did not think much, to ſpend ſome part of his time in treating upon *Sacred Matters*, which Subject he handl'd neither careleſly, nor unpleaſantly. But yet, ſays *Eraſmus*, in my Opinion, he would have deſerv'd more Commendation, had he ſhew'd a little more Devotion, upon ſo Sacred, and ſo Divine a Subject.

Eraſmus, in the *ſame place*, *pag.* 206. remarks, That this Poem *De Partu Virginis* has loſt much of it's Beauty, (which otherwiſe it might have had) by a too frequent uſe of *Synalæpha*'s. And, in Concluſion, *he adds*, That the *whole* Poem in *general*, was fitter for a *Young Man*, who had a mind to try what he could do in

Poetry; than for a grave, ſerious, and Religious Perſon, who really intended any Service to the Publick; And therefore *Eraſmus* ſays, in this reſpect, he prefers that *one Hymn* of *Prudentius De Natali Jeſu*, before thoſe three little Books of *Accius Sincerus.*

Rapin, in his *Reflexions* on *Ariſtotle*'s Treatiſe of *Poeſie*, *part* 1. *ſect.* 32. obſerves to us, That *Sannazarius* has ſome *touches* of the noble *Air* of *Virgil*, but not many; that he has only copy'd *Virgil*'s *Phraſes*, without expreſſing his *Spirit*; and that whenever he ſtrains himſelf, to come up to *Virgil*, he ſoon *falls* and returns again to his own *Genius*; and, in a Word, amidſt the vain *Efforts* of a *Servile* imitation, there continually eſcape from him ſome *Strokes* of his own Natural Spirit.

The *ſame Author*, *part* 2. *ſect.* xvi. of thoſe *Reflexions*, tells us, That *Sannazarius*, who was famous among the *Italian* Poets for his Poem *De Partu Virginis*, had a good *Genius* for writing in *Latin*; for the *purity* of his Style is admirable; but the Contrivance of his *Fable* has no *delicateneſs*, nor is his *Manner* any wiſe proportionable to the dignity of his Subject.

And in his *Thirteenth Section* of this *Second Part* of his *Reflexions*, he takes notice, That *Sannazarius*, in his Poem *De Partu Virginis*, has judiciouſly mingl'd the *Fables* of *Paganiſm*, with the *Myſteries* of *Chriſtian Religion.*

Paulus Jovius, in his *Elogies* of *Learned* Men, ſays, That *Sannazarius*'s Poem, *De Partu Virginis*, took him up no leſs than *Twenty Years* time the *Compoſing*; and that at laſt he was mightily diſappointed, ſince his *Piſcatory Eclogues*, which he made in his Youth, quite eclips'd the glory of *this* and all his *other* Works too.

Lilius

Lilius Gyraldus, notwithſtanding he highly commends *Sannazarius*, for his Diligence, his Exactneſs, his Solid Judgment, and his great skill in *Poetry*; yet he cannot but blame him, for having ſpent ſo much of his time, upon this *one* Poem, *De Partu Virginis*; which by his ſo often *filing* and altering, inſtead of making it better, he (really) made it worſe, *as Gyraldus* thought.

Sappho,

AN Excellent *Poeteſs*, born in the Iſle of *Lesbos*; She was call'd The *Ninth Lyrick*, and *The Tenth Muſe*. She wrote *Epigrams*, *Elegies*, *Jambicks*, *Monodies*, and nine Books of *Lyrick* Verſes; and was the Inventreſs of that kind of Verſe, which from *her* is call'd the *Sapphick*; ſhe attain'd to no ſmall Applauſe in her Contention, firſt with *Steſichorus*, and then with *Alcæus*. According to *Calviſius*, *Sappho* flouriſh'd in the time of *Nabonaſſar*, in the Year of the World, 3341. about ſix Hundred and ſeven Years before *Chriſt*. She wrote in the *Æolick* Dialect.

Some tell us, there were Two of this Name, who liv'd in the ſame Country, and at the ſame time, and both of them *Poeteſſes*. But *Ovid*, *Statius*, and others of the *Latin Poets*, acknowledge but one *Sappho*; in memory of whom the *Romans* erected a moſt Noble *Statue* of *Porphiry*; And the Citizens of *Mitylene*, the Chief City of the Iſland *Lesbos*, had ſo great an honour for

her Memory, that they caus'd her *Image* to be *Stampt* upon their *Coin.*

Voſſius, in the third Book of his *Inſtitutiones Poeticæ*, *pag.* 78, and 97. ſays, That none of the *Greek* Poets excell'd *Sappho* for ſweetneſs of Verſe; and that *She* made *Archilochus* the Model of her Style; but at the ſame time, ſhe took great care, to ſoften, and ſweeten that ſharp Style of his.

Rapin, in his *Reflex.* on *Ariſtotle*'s Treatiſe of *Poeſie*, *part* 2. *ſect.* 30. tells us, It may be avow'd by that which is left us of the Fragments of *Sappho*, that *Demetrius* and *Longinus* have great reaſon to boaſt ſo highly in their Works, of the admirable *Genius* of *this Woman*; for there are found ſome *Strokes* of *Delicacy* the moſt *fine*, and the moſt *paſſionate* in the World.

The *Authors* of the *Athenian Mercury*, *Vol.* v. *Numb.* 13. *Queſt.* 8. remark, That the *Fragment* conſiſting but of a few Lines, which we have of *Sappho*'s, carries ſomething in it ſo *Soft*, *Luſhious* and *Charming*, even in the ſound of the Words, that *Catullus* himſelf, who has endeavour'd ſomewhat like 'em in *Latin*, comes infinitely ſhort of 'em; And ſo have all the Reſt, who have writ their own Thoughts on that Subject.

Monſieur *Bayle*, in his *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*, *Novemb.* 1684. *pag.* 396. ſays, Never were two Perſons in this World ſo much of a Temper, as *Sappho* and *Anacreon*; and both of them the moſt *Amorous* Creatures in Nature. 'Tis a Thouſand pities, ſays *Bayle*, that they did not live at the ſame time, as *Mademoiſelle de Scudery* (very much to the advantage of her *Romance*) ſuppoſes they did: If they had, (ſays *Bayle*,) they ought to have been *Husband* and *Wife*, that ſo the World might have ſeen, what would have been the

Effect,

Effect, of Two ſuch loving Tempers, and ſuch Delicate Souls.

He alſo *obſerves*, that *They* are ſo much alike in their way of Writing, that it is ſomewhat difficult to diſtinguiſh the *One* from the *Other*.

Hofman, in his *Lexicon*, tells us, Some Authors are of Opinion, that the *Elegy* which *Ovid* made under the name of *Sappho*, and which is infinitely beyond his other *Elegies*, was all, or at leaſt the moſt Beautiful Part of it, ſtole from the Poems of the Elegant *Sappho*.

Lucius Annæus Seneca,

BOrn at *Corduba* in *Spain*, both *Philoſopher* and *Poet*, and Uncle to *Lucan*. He died *Anno Domini*, 65. or, as others ſay, 68.

There are ten *Latin Tragedies*, which generally go under his Name, *viz. Hercules Furens*; *Thyeſtes*; *Thebais*; *Hippolytus*; *Oedipus*; *Troades*; *Medea*; *Agamemnon*; *Hercules Oetæus*; and *Octavia*.

Monſieur *Baillet* tells us, That of all the Ten *Latin Tragedies*, which are Collected, and Publiſh'd in a body, under the Name of *Seneca*, it is generally agreed, that the beſt of them were writ by this famous Philoſopher, *Nero*'s Tutor, and that *He* was (really) the Author of the *Medea*, the *Hippolytus*, and the *Troades*. The *Reſt*, ſays *Baillet*, have their Excellencies, and are to be valued; although it is not yet well known, by whom they were writ. But no body, *ſays he*, denies, but the

the meaneſt, and that which ſeems the moſt unworthy the Name of *Seneca*, is the *Octavia*; to which others joyn the *Thebais*, which is the Work of a *Declaimer*, who did not underſtand what belong'd to *Tragedy*.

Voſſius, in his *De Poetis*, places *Seneca* among the *Poets*; tho' at the ſame time he tells us, He did not look upon him to be the Author of all thoſe ſeveral *Tragedies*, which we commonly ſee aſcrib'd to him. But yet, ſays *Voſſius*, There is no doubt to be made, but ſome of them were really his.

To the ſame Effect ſays *Borrichius*, *pag.* 56. Tho' the Learned are not agreed, that all the ſeveral *Tragedies*, which come out under the Name of *Seneca*, may juſtly be attributed to him; yet they are generally inclin'd to think, that the far greateſt part of thoſe *Tragedies* were writ by him.

The ſame *Borrichius* alſo tells us, That *Seneca* writ in a pure Tragical Strain, ſhewing a decent Gravity; and that he was no ways inferior to any of the *Greeks*, either for a Majeſtick Stile, or for an exquiſite way of expreſſing himſelf.

Lipſius could by no means believe, That *Seneca* ever wrote the *Troades*; he had ſo mean an Opinion of this *Tragedy*, that he gave it for granted, it was writ either by ſome little, paltry Poet, or elſe by ſome ignorant Pedant.

But *Joſeph Scaliger* was much offended at this ſevere Cenſure of *Lipſius*, from whom he entirely differ'd, calling this Tragedy, *A Divine Work*, and to be preferr'd before any of the other *Nine*, all which he believes were writ by *Seneca*.

Joſeph Scaliger alſo, in *Scaligerana* 1. ſays, That *Seneca* the Poet is a good Author; but, that we are not

to

to expect from him that exactneſs, which the Rules of the *Old Tragedy* requir'd.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, *pag.* 839. tells us, That for a lofty Majeſtick ſort of Verſe, *Seneca* came not behind the beſt of the *Greek Poets*; nay, that he excell'd *Euripides* in Politeneſs and Beauty. It muſt be own'd, ſays *Scaliger*, that Invention (indeed) is the peculiar property of the *Greeks*; but *Seneca*'s is not beholden to *them*, for that lofty Air, that harmonious ſound, that ſmart Wit, and that briskneſs of Fancy, which every where abounds in him. But yet, *he adds*, that, whenever *Seneca* has a mind to imitate *Sophocles*, he is very unfortunate, and has no luck at it.

Rapin, in the firſt part of his *Reflexions* on *Ariſtotle*'s Treatiſe of *Poeſie*, *ſect.* 25. remarks, That *Seneca* knows nothing of the *Manners*. He ſays, He is a fine Speaker, who is eternally uttering pretty Sayings, but is in no wiſe *Natural* in what he ſpeaks, and whatever Perſons he makes to ſpeak, they always have the Meen of *Actors*.

The *ſame Author*, in the Second part of theſe *Reflexions*, *ſect.* 22. obſerves, That *Seneca*'s Verſe are pompous, his Thoughts lofty, becauſe he would dazzle; but the Contrivance of his *Fables* are of no great Character. This Author (ſays *Rapin*) pleaſes himſelf too much in giving his own *Idea*'s, inſtead of *real* Objects; and he repreſents not always very regularly, what is to be repreſented.

St. *Euremont*, in his *Miſcellaneous Eſſays*, ſays, He does much more eſteem the *Perſon* of *Seneca*, than the *Works* of *Seneca*. I have a great reſpect, *ſays he*, for the Tutor of *Nero*, the Gallant of *Agrippina*, and for that Ambitious Man who pretended to the *Empire*: Of the *Philoſopher*, and *Writer*, I make but little account, and

am

am affected neither with his Stile, nor his Thoughts. His *Latin* has nothing of reſemblance to that of *Auguſtus*'s time; it is neither eaſie, nor natural; all made up of Points, all fanciful and conceited; more of the heat of *Africa*, or *Spain* in them, than the Beauty of *Greece* or *Italy*. You ſee *there* abrupt things, that have indeed the Air and Shape of Sentences; but which have neither their Solidity, nor their good Sence: Which whet and ſpur on the *Fancy*, without gaining the *Judgment*. His forced Diſcourſe (ſays St. *Euremont*) Communicates to Me a ſort of Conſtraint; and the Soul, inſtead of finding *there* its Satisfaction and Repoſe, meets with Trouble and Affliction.

Nero, tho' one of the moſt Wicked Princes of the World, was yet very Ingenious, and had near him a ſort of *Under-Maſters*, extreamly curious, who us'd *Seneca* as a *Pedant*, and turn'd him into *ridicule*. I am not, ſays St. *Euremont*, of the Opinion of *Berville*, who imagin'd that the falſe *Eumolpus* of *Petronius* was the true *Seneca*. If ſo be *Petronius* would have given him an injurious Character, it had been under the Perſon of a *Pedantick Philoſopher*, rather than an *impertinent Poet*. Beſides, 'tis as it were impoſſible to find any Agreement therein.

Seneca was the Richeſt Man in the Empire, and always commended Poverty. *Eumolpus*, a Poet very low in the World, and in the deſpair of his Fortune, he complain'd of the Ingratitude of the Age, and found no other Comfort than that *bonæ Mentis ſoror eſt Paupertas*. If *Seneca* had Vices, he conceal'd them with Care under the appearance of Wiſdom: *Eumolpus* was ſo vain as to ſhew *his*, and us'd his Pleaſures with much liberty.

I don't apprehend then (ſays St. *Euremont*) upon what *Berville* could ground his Conjecture. But I am deceiv'd,

ſays

ſays he, if all that *Petronius* ſays of the Style of his time, of the Corruption of Eloquence and Poetry, if the *Controverſiæ ſententiis vibrantibus pictæ*, which offended him ſo much, if the *Vanus ſententiarum Strepitus*, wherewith he was aſtoniſh'd, doth not belong to *Seneca*, if the *per Ambages & Deorum Miniſteria*, &c. did not relate to the *Pharſalia* of *Lucan*: If the Encomiums, which he gives to *Cicero*, *Virgil*, and *Horace*, were not deſign'd in Contempt of the *Uncle*, and *Nephew*. Be it as it will, to return to what appears to Me (ſays St. *Euremont*) concerning *Seneca*, I never read his Writings, without being of quite contrary Sentiments to thoſe which he would inſpire his Readers with. If he attempts to perſwade Poverty, I long for his Riches; his Vertue frightens me, and the leaſt diſpos'd to Vice would abandon himſelf to Pleaſures, by the deſcription he gives of them. In a Word, he ſpeaks ſo much of Death, and leaves me ſuch Melancholy *Idea's*, that I do my utmoſt Endeavours not to improve by his Lecture. The fineſt Things in his Works, are the Examples and Citations he mingles therein. As he liv'd in a curious Court, and knew a thouſand fine Things that occurr'd in All Ages, he produces ſome that are very agreeable; ſometimes of the *Greeks*, ſometimes of *Cæſar*, *Auguſtus*, and *Mecænas*; for after all, his Parts and Knowledge were infinite: But his Style, ſays St. *Euremont*, has nothing that affects me; his Opinions are too ſevere: And 'tis ridiculous that one who liv'd in abundance, and was ſo careful of himſelf, ſhould encourage nothing but *Poverty* and *Death*.

William Shakeſpear,

ONE of the moſt Eminent Poets of his Time; *He* was Born at *Stratford* upon *Avon* in *Warwickſhire*, and flouriſh'd in the Reigns of Queen *Elizabeth*, and King *James* the Firſt. He died on the 23*d* of *April* 1616. in the 53*d*. Year of his Age.

He has Writ about Forty Six *Plays*, all which except Three, are Bound in one Volume in *Folio*, Printed at *London*, 1685.

Gerard Langbaine, in his Account of the *Engliſh Dramatick Poets*, ſays, That *Shakeſpear*'s Natural Genius to *Poetry* was ſo Excellent, that like thoſe *Diamonds*, which are found in *Cornwall*, Nature had little, or no occaſion for the Aſſiſtance of Art to poliſh it. The truth is, 'Tis agreed on by moſt, that his Learning was not extraordinary; And I am apt to believe, (*ſays Langbaine*) that his skill in the *French* and *Italian* Tongues, exceeded his knowledg in the *Roman* Language. Few Perſons that are acquainted with *Dramatick Poetry*, but are convinced of the Excellency of his Compoſitions, in all Kinds of it. *Langbaine* tells us, for his part he eſteems *Shakeſpear*'s Plays beyond any that have ever been Publiſh'd in our Language: And though he extreamly admires *Johnſon*, and *Fletcher*; yet (*ſays he*) I muſt ſtill aver, that when in Competition with *Shakeſpear*, I muſt apply to them, what *Juſtus Lipſius* Writ in his Letter to *Andræas Schottus*, concerning *Terence* and *Plautus*, when Compar'd; *Terentium amo, admiror, ſed Plautum magis.*

Edward Phillips, in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, calls *Shakeſpear*, The Glory of the *Engliſh* Stage; whoſe Nativity

at

at *Stratford* upon *Avon*, is the higheſt Honour that Town can boaſt of; from an *Actor* of *Tragedies* and *Comedies*, he became a *Maker*; and ſuch a *Maker*, ſays *Phillips*, that though ſome others may perhaps pretend to a more exact *Decorum* and *Oeconomie*, eſpecially in *Tragedy*, never any expreſt a more Lofty and *Tragick* height; never any repreſented *Nature* more purely to the *Life*; And where the Poliſhments of Art are moſt wanting, as probably his Learning was not extraordinary, he pleaſes with a certain *Wild* and *Native Elegance*.

Dryden tells us, in his *Eſſay* of *Dramatick Poeſie*, *pag* 33, 34. That *Shakeſpear* was the Man who of all *Modern*, and perhaps *Ancient Poets*, had the largeſt and moſt Comprehenſive Soul. All the Images of *Nature* were ſtill preſent to him, (*ſays Dryden*) and he drew them not *laboriouſly*, but *luckily*; when he deſcribes any thing, you more than *ſee* it, you *feel* it too. Thoſe who accuſe him to have wanted Learning, give him the greater Commendation: He was *Naturally* Learned; he needed not the Spectacles of Books to Read *Nature*; he look'd *inwards*, and found her *there*. I cannot (*ſays Dryden*) ſay, he is every where alike; were he ſo, I ſhould do him injury to compare him with the greateſt of Mankind. He is many times flat, inſipid; his *Comick* Wit degenerating into *Clenches*; his ſerious ſwelling into *Bombaſt*. But he is always great, when ſome great Occaſion is preſented to him: No Man can ſay he ever had a fit Subject for his Wit, and did not then raiſe himſelf as high above the reſt of *Poets*,

Quantum lenta ſolent inter viburna Cupreſſi.

The conſideration of this (as *Dryden* obſerves) made Mr. *Hales* of *Eaton* ſay, That there was no Subject of

which any *Poet* ever Writ, but he would produce it better done in *Shakeſpear*; and however others are now generally preferr'd before him, yet the Age wherein he liv'd, which had Contemporaries with him, *Fletcher* and *Johnſon*, never equal'd them to him in their eſteem: And in the laſt Kings Court, when *Ben's* Reputation was at higheſt, Sir *John Suckling*, and with him the greater part of the *Courtiers*, ſet our *Shakeſpear* far above him.

Dryden, in his *Preface* to *Troilus* and *Creſſida*, remarks, That the *Engliſh Tongue* in general is ſo much refin'd ſince *Shakeſpear's* time, that many of his *Words*, and more of his *Phraſes*, are ſcarce intelligible. And of thoſe which we do underſtand, ſome are ungrammatical, others courſe; and his whole Style (ſays *Dryden*) is ſo peſter'd with *Figurative Expreſſions*, that it is as *affected* as it is obſcure. 'Tis true, that in his *latter Plays* he had worn off ſomewhat of the Ruſt.

'Tis one of the Excellencies of *Shakeſpear*, ſays *Dryden*, in the ſaid *Preface*, that the *Manners* of his Perſons are generally apparent; and you ſee their bent and Inclinations. *Fletcher* comes far ſhort of him in this, as indeed he does almoſt in every thing: There are but *glimmerings* of *Manners* in moſt of his *Comedies*, which run upon *Adventures*: And in his *Tragedies*, *Rollo*, *Otto*, the *King* and *No King*, *Melantius*, and many others of his beſt, are but Pictures ſhown you in the *Twi-light*; you know not whether they reſemble *Vice*, or *Vertue*; and they are either *Good*, *Bad*, or *Indifferent*, as the preſent Scene requires it. But of all *Poets* (ſays *Dryden*) this Commendation is to be given to *Ben. Johnſon*, that the *Manners* even of the moſt inconſiderable Perſons in his *Plays* are every where apparent.

The

The *Characters* of *Fletcher* are poor and narrow, (*says Dryden*) in Comparison of *Shakespear's*; I remember not one which is not borrow'd from him; unless (says *Dryden*) you will except that strange mixture of a Man, in the *King* and *No King*: So that in this part *Shakespear* is generally worth our Imitation; and to imitate *Fletcher* (says *Dryden*) is but to Copy after him who was a Copyer. **Dryd.** *Ibid.*

If *Shakespear* were stript of all the *Bombast* in his *Passions*, and dress'd in the most Vulgar Words, we should still find the Beauties of his *Thoughts* remaining; if his Embroideries were burnt down, there would still be Silver at the bottom of the Melting-Pot. **Dryden.** *Ibid.*

Tate, who alter'd *Shakespear's Richard* the *Second*, tells us, There are some *Master-Touches* in this Play, that will vye with the best *Roman Poets*.

All this together yet is but a part
Of Dialogue, *that great and powerful Art,*
Now almost lost, which the Old Grecians *knew,*
From Whence the Romans *fainter Copies drew,*
Scarce comprehended since but by a Few.
Plato *and* Lucian *are the best Remains*
Of all the Wonders which this Art contains;
Yet to our selves we justice must allow,
Shakespear *and* Fletcher *are the Wonders now:*
Consider them, and Read them o're and o're,
Go see them Play'd, then Read them as before;
For tho' in many things they grosly Fail,
Over our Passions still they so prevail,
That our own Grief by theirs *is rock'd asleep,*
The Dull *are forc'd to* feel, *the* Wise *to* weep.

Mulgr. Essay on *Poetry*.

How

How defective *Shakespear* has been in his *Plots*, *Rimer* has at large discover'd in his *Criticisms.*

Sir *Philip Sidney,*

SON to Sir *Henry Sidney*, thrice Lord *Deputy* of *Ireland*, and Sisters Son to *Robert* Earl of *Leicester*, was Born at *Penshurst* in the County of *Kent*, in the Year 1554. Bred at *Christ-Church* in *Oxford.* He was a Gentleman of great Accomplishments, and of a Sweet Nature. His Parts so endear'd him to Queen *Elizabeth*, that she sent him upon an Embassy to the Emperour of *Germany* at *Vienna*, which he discharg'd to his Honour, and her Approbation: Yea, his fame was so renown'd throughout all *Christendom*, that (as it is commonly reported) he was in Election for the Kingdom of *Poland;* though the *Author* of his *Life*, Printed before his *Arcadia*, doth doubt of the Truth of it. He was at last made Governor of *Flushing.* But most unfortunately, in the very prime of his Years, he was wounded with a Shot, in a small Skirmish before *Zutphen*, on the 22*d.* of *September*, 1586. of which he Died, on the 16*th.* of *October* following.

He Wrote a Famous Piece, call'd his *Arcadia*; as also *A Defence of Poesie*; and a Book Intituled *Astrophel* and *Stella*, with divers *Songs* and *Sonnets* in praise of his Lady, whom he Celebrated under that Bright Name. He also Translated part of that Excellent Treatise of *Philip Morney du Plessis*, of the *Truth* of the *Christian Religion.*

Dr.

Dr. *Fuller*, in his *Worthies of England*, ſays, That Sir *Philip Sidney* was ſo Eſſential to the *Engliſh Court*, that it ſeem'd maim'd without his Company, being a Compleat Maſter of *Matter* and *Language*, as his *Arcadia* doth evidence.

Cambden, in his *Hiſtory* of Queen *Elizabeth*, calls Sir *Philip Sidney*, A Perſon of great Virtue, Excellent Wit, moſt exquiſite Learning, and one of a Sweet Temper.

The *ſame Author*, in his *Britannia*, ſays, That God *therefore* ſent Sir *Philip Sidney* into the World, even to ſhew unto our Age a *Sample* of *Ancient Virtues.*

Grotius, in his *Annals* of the *Netherlands*, ſays, That the Battel at *Zutphen* prov'd fortunate enough to the *Engliſh*, had it not been ſullied by the Death of Sir *Philip Sidney*, a Young Gentleman, Born with the greateſt Advantages that could be; and who had honour'd the Nobility of his Birth, by the true Splendor of all Beautifying Learning.

Lipſius Dedicated to Sir *Philip Sidney* his Dialogue *De Rectâ Pronunciatione Latinæ Linguæ*, and hath this Paſſage in his Epiſtle, *O Britanniæ tuæ clarum ſidus, cui certatim lucem affundunt Virtus, Muſa, Gratia, Fortuna.*

Speed, in his *Chronicle*, calls Sir *Philip Sidney*, That Worthy Gentleman, in whom were Compleat all Virtues and Valours, that could reſide in Man.

Dr. *Heylin*, in his Deſcription of *Greece*, ſays, That Sir *Philip Sidney's Arcadia*, beſides its Excellent Language, rare Contrivances, and Delectable Stories, hath in it all the Strains of *Poeſie*, Comprehendeth the whole Art of Speaking; and to them who can diſcern and will obſerve, affordeth notable Rules for Demeanour, both private and publick.

Sir

Sir *William Temple*, in his *Essay* of *Poetry*, *pag.* 33. observes, That the true Spirit or Vein of *Ancient Poetry*, under the Name of *Romance*, seems to shine most in Sir *Philip Sidney*, whom, *he says*, he esteems both the greatest *Poet*, and the Noblest Genius of any that have left Writings behind them, and Publish'd in ours, or any other Modern Language; A Person Born Capable not only of Forming the greatest *Idea's*, but of Leaving the Noblest Examples, if the length of his Life had been equal to the Excellence of his Wit, and his Vertues.

Edward Leigh, in his *Treatise* of *Learning* and *Learned* Men, tells us, that the same thing may be said of Sir *Philip Sidney*, as *Austen* said of *Homer*, That he is very Sweet and Delightful even in his Vanities. Yet he was not so fond of his *Arcadia*, as the Bishop *Heliodorus* of his *Amorous* Book; for he desir'd when he Died (having first Consulted a Minister about it) to have had it suppres's'd.

Nat. Lee, in his *Epistle Dedicatory* to *Philip* Earl of *Pembroke*, before *Cæsar Borgia*, says, That he Challenges all the Men of Fame to show an Equal to the Immortal *Sidney*, one who was so most Extravagantly Great, that he refus'd to be a *King*. He was at once a *Cæsar* and a *Virgil*, the *Leading Souldier*, and the *Formost Poet*.

'Tis generally reported, that Sir *Phillip Sidney*, in the extream Agony of his Wounds, earnestly desir'd an Intimate Friend of his, to Burn his *Arcadia*; but what Answer his Friend made, is uncertain: However this gave occasion for the ensuing *Epigram*:

Ipse tuam moriens (*sed* Conjuge *teste*) *jubebas*
Arcadiam *sævis ignibus esse Cibum*:
Si meruit mortem, quia Flammam accendit Amoris,
Mergi, *non* Uri *debuit iste Liber.*

In

- *In librum quæcunq; cadat Sententia: Nullâ*
  Debuit Ingenium morte perire tuum.

Sophocles,

A *Tragick Poet*, Born at *Athens* the Second Year of the Seventy Firſt *Olympiad.* He Died in the 95*th.* Year of his Age, Six Years after *Euripides.* He was called *The New Syren*, The *Flower* of *Poets*, and the *Bee*, from the ſweetneſs of his Speech. He is ſaid to have Written 120, or as others tell us, 123 *Tragedies*, of which Seven only are Extant, *viz. Ajax Flagellifer*, *Electra*, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, *Antigone*, *Trachiniæ*, *Philoctetes*, and *Oedipus Coloneus.* He is ſaid to have been *Victor* Four and Twenty times. And as *Valerius Maximus* informs us, the laſt time he came off *Victor*, he ſo little expected it, that he died with the very Joy; but *Lucian* tells us, he was choak'd with a *Grape-Stone.* He added much to the perfecting *Tragedy*, in which he was far more exact, than either *Theſpis* or *Eſchylus*, that went before him. He encreas'd the Number of the *Chorus* from *Twelve* to *Fifteen.* Hence therefore *Boileau* gives him this following Character:

Then Sophocles, *the Genius of his Age,*
Increas'd the Pomp, and Beauty of the Stage,
Ingag'd the Chorus *Song in every part,*
And Poliſh'd rugged Verſe by Rules of Art:

He, in the Greek, *did those Perfections gain,*
Which the weak Latin *never could attain.*
Boileau's *Art* of *Poetry.*

Cicero, in *Catone Majore*, relates, That *Sophocles*, who liv'd to a very great Age, did to the very last continue his Writing *Tragedies*; which was the occasion of his Sons making their Complaint to the *Judges* against him; setting forth, that the good Old Man, their Father, did so wholly apply himself to this sort of Study, that he ne're minded the concerns of his Family; And therefore they Petition'd, that they would please to assign to him, as being *non Compos Mentis*, a Guardian to look after the Estate. But assoon as the *Old Gentleman* heard this, he Immediately produc'd his *Oedipus Coloneus*, (which he had Writ but a little before) reciting it to the *Judges*, and then ask'd them, whether they thought, a Man who had lost his Senses, could ever be the Author of the same? Whereupon the *Judges* presently dismist the *Cause*, and sent away the *Sons* with a Flea in their Ears.

Tully, in his Second Book *De Divinatione*, calls *Sophocles*, A Divine *Poet.*

How great an esteem *Virgil* had for *this Author*, appears by his *Eglogue* 8. *verse* the 10*th.*

Sola Sophocleo *tua Carmina digna Cothurno.*

Whereby *Virgil* does in a particular manner distinguish *Sophocles* from all the other *Tragick Poets.*

Rimer, in his *Short View of Tragedy*, *pag.* 158. remarks, That at *Athens* (as it is reported) the *Tragedies* of *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*, were Enroll'd with their *Laws*, and made part of their *Statute-Book.*

Longinus,

Longinus, in his Book περὶ ὕψους, obſerves, That *Sophocles* had an excellent faculty, in giving the true and natural Deſcription of things.

Quintilian, *lib.* 10. *cap.* 1. tells us, That *Sophocles* had wonderful skill in moving the Paſſions; and that his *particular Talent* lay, in exciting Compaſſion.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 2. calls *Sophocles* an Admirable Author; *he ſays*, he is the moſt conſiderable of all the *Greek* Poets; and, for the moſt part, beyond *Virgil* too. *He* ſtiles the *Philoctetes*, a Divine *Tragedy*; and ſeems as it were aſtoniſh'd, that *Sophocles* could ſpeak ſo many fine things upon ſuch a Barren Subject. And *he* alſo cries up his *Oedipus Tyrannus*, as a moſt Beautiful Piece. To Conclude, *he tells* us, Whoever has Read *Sophocles* well, is no ſmall *Proficient* in the *Greek Tongue*; and that it is a Thouſand pities, we have loſt ſo many of his moſt Excellent *Tragedies*.

Voſſius, in the Second Book of his *Inſtitutiones Poeticæ*, *pag.* 75. tells us, That the Style of *Sophocles* is not only Sublime, Lofty, and Magnificent, but alſo Pure and Correct.

The *ſame Author*, in the ſame Book, *pag.* 53. ſays, That *Sophocles* tranſcends *Euripides* in High, Majeſtick Expreſſions; but, that *Euripides* excels *him* in neatneſs and compactneſs of Style.

Borrichius, in his *Diſſert. Acad. De Poetis*, *pag.* 30. obſerves, That *Sophocles*, by his Style, ſeems to be rather a Man for *buſineſs*, than for *words*; whereas the Style of *Euripides*, ſavours more of the *Scholar*, and the *Orator*.

Rápin, in the Second Part of his *Reflex.* on *Ariſt.* of *Poeſie*, *ſect.* xxii. takes notice, That *Sophocles* is too elaborate in his Diſcourſe; *that* his Art is not hid enough in ſome of his Pieces, it lies too open, and too near the light; *that* he ſometimes becomes Obſcure, by his too great affecta-

tion to be Sublime; and the Nobleneſs of his Expreſſion, is injurious to the perſpicuity; His *Plots*, ſays *Rapin*, are not all ſo happily *unravell'd*, as that of the *Oedipus*. The *Diſcovery* in the *Ajax* anſwers not to the *Intrigue*; the *Author* ought not to have ended a Spectacle of that Terror and Pity, with a dull and frivolous Conteſt about the *Sepulture* of *Ajax*, who then had Slain himſelf. And in the *ſame Piece*, ſays *Rapin*, that *Machin* of *Minerva* is too violent, who caſts an Enchantment over the Eyes of *Ajax*, to ſave *Ulyſſes*, whom *Ajax* would have kill'd, if he had known him. *Oedipus*, ſays *Rapin*, ought not to have been ignorant of the *Aſſaſſinat* of the King of *Thebes*; the ignorance he is in of the *Murder*, which makes all the Beauty of the *Intreague*, is not *probable*.

Dryden, in the *Preface* to *his Oedipus*, ſays, That *Oedipus* was the moſt Celebrated Piece of all Antiquity; that *Sophocles*, not only the greateſt Wit, but one of the greateſt Men in *Athens*; made it for the *Stage* at the Publick Coſt, and that it had the Reputation of being his *Maſter-Piece*, not only amongſt the Seven of *his* which are ſtill remaining, but of the greater Number which are Periſh'd.

Ariſtotle has more than once admir'd it in his Book of *Poetry*.

Jacobus Thomaſius, in his *De Plagio Literario*, tells us, That *Sophocles* was ſo great a *Plagiary*, that *Philoſtratus* of *Alexandria* Wrote a Piece on purpoſe, to ſhew from what Authors he had ſtole.

Edmund

Edmund Spencer,

A Famous *Engliſh* Poet, born in the City of *London*, and brought up in *Pembroke-Hall* in *Cambridge*; He flouriſh'd in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*. His great Friend was Sir *Philip Sidney*, by whoſe means he was preferr'd to be *Secretary* to his Brother Sir *Henry Sidney*, who was ſent *Deputy* into *Ireland*, where he is ſaid to have written his *Fairy-Queen*; but upon the return of Sir *Henry*, his Employment ceaſing, he alſo return'd into *England*, and having loſt his great Friend Sir *Philip*, fell into Poverty; whereupon he addreſt himſelf to Queen *Elizabeth*, preſenting her with a Poem, with which ſhe was ſo well pleas'd, that he had order'd him 500 *l.* for his ſupport, which nevertheleſs was abridg'd to One Hundred Pounds by the Lord Treaſurer *Cecil*, who hearing of it, and owing him a grudge for ſome Reflections in *Mother Hubbard's Tale*, cry'd out to the Queen, *What all this for a Song?* This he is ſaid to have taken ſo much to Heart, that he contracted a deep Melancholy, which ſoon after brought his life to a Period, *Anno Dom.* 1598.

Edward Phillips, in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, ſays, That *Spencer* was the firſt of our *Engliſh* Poets that brought *Heroick Poeſie* to any perfection; his *Fairy-Queen* being for great Invention and Poetick Heighth, judg'd little Inferiour, if not Equal to the Chief of the Ancient *Greeks* and *Latins*, or Modern *Italians*; But the firſt Poem that brought him into Eſteem, was his *Shepherds Kalendar*. This *Piece* was highly admir'd by Sir *Philip Sidney*.

Cambden,

Cambden, in his *Hiſtory* of Queen *Elizabeth*, ſays, That *Edmund Spencer* was a *Londoner* by Birth, and a Scholar alſo of the Univerſity of *Cambridge*, born under ſo favourable an Aſpect of the *Muſes*, that be ſurpaſs'd all the *Engliſh* Poets of former Times, not excepting *Chaucer* himſelf, his Fellow-Citizen. But by a *Fate* which ſtill follows *Poets*, he always wreſtled with *Poverty*.

Dr. *Fuller*, in his *Worthies of England*, affirms, That *Edmund Spencer* was an Excellent Linguiſt, Antiquary, Philoſopher, and Mathematician; yet ſo poor (as being a *Poet*) that he was thought *Famem* non *Famæ ſcribere*.

Sir *William Temple*, in his *Eſſay* of *Poetry*, *pag.* 46, 47. remarks, That the *Religion* of the *Gentiles*, had been woven into the *Contexture* of all the *Ancient Poetry*, with a very agreeable Mixture; which made the *Moderns* affect, to give that of *Chriſtianity* a place alſo in *their* Poems. But the *true Religion*, was not found to become *Fiction* ſo well, as a *Falſe* had done, and all their Attempts of this Kind, ſeem'd rather to debaſe *Religion*, than to heighten *Poetry*. *Spencer*, ſays *Temple*, endeavour'd to ſupply *this* with *Morality*, and to make *Inſtruction*, inſtead of *Story*, the Subject of an *Epick* Poem. His Execution was Excellent, and his Flights of Fancy very Noble and High, but his Deſign was poor, and his *Moral* lay ſo bare, that it loſt the Effect; 'tis true, ſays *Temple*, the Pill was Gilded, but ſo thin, that the Colour and the Taſte were too eaſily diſcover'd.

Rimer, in the *Preface* to his Tranſlation of *Rapin's* Reflexions on *Ariſtotle* of *Poeſie*, tells us, That in his Judgment, *Spencer* may be reckon'd the firſt of our *Heroick* Poets; He had a large Spirit, a ſharp Judgment, and a *Genius* for *Heroick Poeſie*, perhaps above any that ever writ ſince *Virgil*. But our Misfortune is, ſays *Rimer*,

mer, he wanted a true *Idea*; and lost himself, by following an unfaithful Guide. Though besides *Homer* and *Virgil* he had read *Tasso*, yet he rather suffer'd himself to be misled by *Ariosto*; with whom blindly rambling on *marvellous Adventures*, he makes no Conscience of *Probability*. All is Fanciful and Chimerical, without any Uniformity, or without any foundation in Truth; in a Word, his Poem (says *Rimer*) is perfect *Fairy-Land*.

Dryden, in his *Dedication* to the Earl of *Dorset* before the Translation of *Juvenal*, *pag.* viii. says, That the *English* have only to boast of *Spencer* and *Milton*, in *Heroick Poetry*; who neither of them wanted either *Genius*, or *Learning*, to have been perfect *Poets*; and yet both of them are liable to many Censures. For there is no *Uniformity* in the Design of *Spencer*: He aims at the Accomplishment of no one Action: He raises up a *Hero* for every one of his Adventures; and endows each of them with some particular *Moral Vertue*, which renders them all equal, without Subordination or Preference. Every one is most valiant in his own *Legend*; only (says *Dryden*) we must do him that justice, to observe, that *Magnanimity*, which is the Character of Prince *Arthur*, shines throughout the *whole Poem*; and Succours the rest, when they are in distress. The Original of every Knight, was then living in the Court of Queen *Elizabeth*: And he attributed to each of them that Virtue, which he thought was most conspicuous in them: An Ingenious piece of flattery, tho' it turn'd not much to his Account. Had he liv'd to finish his Poem, in the six remaining *Legends*, it had certainly been more of a piece; but cou'd not have been perfect, because the *Model* was not *true*. But Prince *Arthur*, or his chief Patron, Sir *Philip Sidney*, whom he intended to make

happy,

happy, by the Marriage of his *Gloriana*, dying before him, depriv'd the Poet, both of Means and Spirit, to accompliſh his Deſign: For the reſt, his *Obſolete Language*, and the *ill Choice* of his *Stanza*, are faults but of the Second Magnitude: For notwithſtanding the *firſt* he is ſtill Intelligible, at leaſt, after a little practice; And for the *laſt*, he is the more to be admir'd; that labouring under ſuch a difficulty, his Verſes are ſo Numerous, ſo Various, and ſo Harmonious, that only *Virgil*, whom he has profeſtly imitated, has ſurpaſs'd him, among the *Romans*; And only Mr. *Waller* among the *Engliſh*, ſays *Dryden*.

The Expence of his Funeral and Monument was defray'd at the ſole charge of *Robert*, firſt of that Name, Earl of *Eſſex*. He lies buried in *Weſtminſter-Abbey*, near *Chaucer*, with this *Epitaph*:

Edmundus Spencer, *Iondinenſis, Anglicorum Poetarum noſtri ſeculi fuit Princeps, quod ejus* Poemata, *faventibus Muſis, & victuro genio conſcripta comprobant. Obiit immaturâ morte, Anno Salutis*, 1598. *& prope* Galfredum Chaucerum *conditur, qui fœliciſſimè* Poeſin *Anglicis literis primus illuſtravit. In quem hæc* Scripta *ſunt* Epitaphia.

Hîc prope Chaucerum *ſitus eſt* Spenſerius, *illi*
Proximus Ingenio, proximus ut Tumulo.
Hîc prope Chaucerum Spenſere *poeta poetam*
Conderis, & verſu! quàm tumulo proprior.
Anglica te vivo vixit, plauſitque Poeſis;
Nunc moritura timet, te moriente, mori.

Publius

Publius Papinius Statius,

A *Neopolitan*, who flouriſht under *Domitian*, though by ſome confounded with *Statius Surculus* the great *Rhetorician* of *Tholouſe*, in the time of *Nero*.

There are of his Writings extant, his *Thebais*, his *Achilleis*, and his *Sylvæ*.

Voſſius, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, obſerves, That it is very remarkable, that *Martial*, who was a great admirer of *Stella* the Poet, ſhould never make any mention of *Statius*, who was ſo intimate with *Stella*, that he Dedicated to him the firſt Book of his *Sylvæ*. But *Voſſius* ſuppoſes, this might proceed from Envy and Emulation in *Martial*; who could not brook it, that *Papinius* ſhould be ſo much in *Domitian's* favour, on the account of his having ſo good a Knack in making *Ex-tempore-Verſes*; wherein, as *Voſſius* tells us, he far excell'd *Martial*.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, *pag.* 843, 844. calls *Statius* a moſt polite, and a moſt ingenious Poet. *He ſays*, there are none either of the Ancient or Modern Poets, that did tread ſo near to the heels of *Virgil*; and that he had come nearer him, if he had not affected to follow him too cloſe. For being in his own nature high and lofty, whenever he endeavour'd to excel, and exert himſelf, he preſently fell into Expreſſions, that were too haughty and ſwelling. But beyond all diſpute, unleſs it be that *Phenix* of the Age, *Virgil*, there are none elſe of the *Heroick* Poets, ſays *Scaliger*, whether *Greek* or *Latin*, that can be compar'd

to this *our Author*; whoſe Verſes are to be preferr'd before thoſe of *Homer*.

Stephanus Claverius, in his Notes upon *Claudian*, ſtiles him, The Noble and Generous *Statius*, and one of an admirable quick Wit.

Iſaac Caſaubon, in his Comment upon *Suetonius* of *Domitian*, calls *Statius*, An Excellent Poet.

Turnebus, in the Twenty Sixth Book of his *Adverſaria*, *cap.* 23. ſays, That *Papinius* was a very good Poet.

Mich. de Marolles, in the *Preface* to his *French* Tranſlation of *Statius*, complains, That the Works of *this Author*, are not ſo much valued as they ought to be; ſince, as he declares, unleſs it be *Virgil*, he knows none that ſurpaſſes him.

Hugo Grotius, in a Letter to *Gronovius*, dated at *Paris*, *Decemb.* x. 1637. ſays, He always had a great eſteem for *Papinius*, whom he reckon'd not much inferiour to *Virgil* for all ſorts of Learning; nay, even in *Poetry*, ſays *Grotius*, take him in ſome reſpects, (if the *Criticks* will pardon me for ſaying ſo) he is not much behind him, if any thing at all.

Juſtus Lipſius, in the firſt *Century* of *Epiſtles*, *Epiſt.* 13. calls *Papinius*, A ſublime and lofty Poet; who, whatever others may think, was, in his Opinion, neither haughty, nor affected in his Style.

Borrichius, *de Poetis*, *pag.* 62. tells us, That *Statius*, the Favourite of *Domitian*, had wrote ſeveral things, in a learned and lofty Style; but, that many of them were loſt, and among others, that famous Tragedy of his, the *Agave*, which by reaſon of his Poverty he was fain to ſell to *Paris*, that he might Publiſh it as his own. We have now extant his *Sylvæ*, in five Books; his *Thebais*,

bais, in Twelve Books; and his *Achilleis*, in two. In all which ſeveral Pieces, ſays *Borrichius*, his Style generally appears to be florid, Choice, and Magnificent; yet in his *Sylvæ*, the Style is purer, and more natural; in his *Thebais*, fuller of Art; and in his *Achilleis*, it is more uneven. Hence therefore, ſome of the *Criticks* declare, That it is with *Statius* among the *Poets*, as it was with *Alexander* the *Great* among the *Heroes*, *viz.* that his great *Virtues* were mix'd with great *Vices*; And that ſometimes his Verſe runs in a truly lofty, majeſtick Strain; and ſometimes he mounts above the Clouds in a high, bombaſtick Style; and then again, *Icarus* like, he falls from the greateſt heighth, down to the very ground. And therefore *Famianus Strada* very properly ſuppoſes *Statius*, to be ſeated upon the very higheſt part of *Parnaſſus*'s Hill, and in ſo much danger, that he ſeems to be like a Man, who is juſt ready to fall.

Rapin, in the firſt part of his *Reflex.* on *Ariſtotle*'s Book of *Poeſie*, *ſect.* 18. ſays, That thoſe who place the *Eſſence* of *Poetry* in big and pompous words, as *Statius* among the *Latins*, and *Du Bartas* among the *French*, are much miſtaken in their account, when they aſpire to the Glory of *Poetry* by ſuch feeble means.

The *ſame Author*, *ſect.* 30. remarks, That *Statius*, by an Affectation of great Words, and ſwelling Expreſſions, fills the *Ears*, without ever touching the *Heart*.

He further *obſerves*, in the Second part of thoſe *Reflexions*, *ſect.* xv. That *Statius* is as fantaſtical in his *Idea*'s, as in his *Expreſſions*; and that his Two Poems, the *Thebais* and *Achilleis*, have nothing in them *regular*, all is *vaſt* and *diſproportionable*.

Dryden, in his *Apology* for *Heroick Poetry*, obſerves to us, That *Lucan* and *Statius* were Men of an un-

bounded Imagination, but who often wanted the Poize of Judgment.

The *ſame Author*, in his *Dedication* to the Earl of *Dorſet* before the *Tranſlat.* of *Juvenal*, *pag.* vii. calls *Statius*, The beſt Verſificator next to *Virgil*; but yet he ſays, He knew not how to *Deſign* after him, tho' he had the *Model* in his Eye.

Sir *John Suckling*,

WAS born at *Witham* in the County of *Middleſex*, in the Year 1613. and which was Extraordinary, in the beginning of the Eleventh Month, according to his Mother's Reckoning. Nor was his Life leſs remarkable, than his Birth: For he had ſo pregnant a Genius, that he ſpoke *Latin* at Five Years Old, and writ it at Nine Years of Age. His incomparable Parts made him much taken notice of in the Reign of King *Charles* the Firſt, to whom he was *Comptroller*. His Skill in *Languages*, and *Muſick*, was remarkable; but above all his *Poetry*, ſays *Langbaine*, took with all the People, whoſe Souls were poliſh'd by the Charms of the *Muſes*.

This Ingenious Gentleman died of a Feaver, being about 29 Years of Age.

Beſides his *Poems*, he wrote three *Plays*, the *Goblins*, a *Tragi-Comedy*; *Brennoralt*, a *Tragedy*; and *Aglaura*, a *Tragi-Comedy*.

Winſtanley,

Winſtanley ſays, That Sir *John Suckling*, in his time, the Delight of the Court, and Darling of the Muſes, was one ſo fill'd with *Phœbean* Fire, as for Excellency of Wit, was worthy to be Crown'd with a Wreath of Stars; though ſome Attribute the ſtrength of his Lines to ſavour more of the *Grape* than the *Lamp*. Indeed he made *Poetry* his Recreation, not his Study; and did not ſo much ſeek Fame, as it was put upon him. In my mind, ſays *Winſtanley*, he gives the beſt Character of himſelf, in thoſe Verſes of his in the *Seſſions of the Poets*:

Suckling *next was call'd, but did not appear,*
But ſtraight one whiſper'd Apollo *i'th' ear,*
That of all Men living he car'd not for't,
He lov'd not the Mules *ſo well as his* Sport.

And prized black Eyes, or a lucky hit
At Bowles, above all the Trophies of Wit.
But Apollo *was angry, and publickly ſaid,*
'Twere fit that a Fine were ſet upon's head.

Phillips, in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, calls Sir *John Suckling*, A Witty and Elegant *Courtier*; whoſe Works, Entituled *Fragmenta Aurea*, have a pretty touch of a Gentile Spirit, and ſeem to ſavour more of the *Grape*, than the *Lamp*, and ſtill keep up their Reputation equal with any Writ ſo long ago.

Lloyd, in his *Memoirs*, *pag.* 159. gives this Character of Sir *John Suckling*, That He had the ſtrange happineſs to make whatſoever he did, become him. His *Poems* being clean, ſprightly, and Natural; his *Diſcourſes*, Full and Convincing; his *Plays*, Well-humour'd

and

and Taking; his *Letters*, Fragrant and Sparkling; only his *Thoughts* were not so loose as his *Expression*, witness his Excellent Discourse to my Lord of *Dorset* about Religion.

Torquato Tasso,

THE Chief of *Italian Heroick* Poets, the Son of *Bernardo Tasso*, and *Portia de Rubeis*; He was born at *Sorrento*, an Ancient City of *Italy*, about 18 Miles from *Naples*, on the tenth of *April*, 1544. He died at *Rome* on the twenty seventh of *March*, 1595.

His chief Poems are, *Gierusalemme Liberata*; *Gierusalemme Conquistata*; *Rinaldo*; *Torismondo*, a Tragedy; *le Sette Giornate del Mondo creato*; and *Amintas*, a *Pastoral.*

Baillet, in the *Jugemens des Sçavans*, tells us, That about the latter End of the last *Century*, and the beginning of this, it was with great heat disputed among the *Italians*, which was to have the Preference, *Tasso* or *Arioſto*; but (*says he*) now, this Controversie is at an End; And, in spight of the Academy *La Crusca*, and of some others who are less Considerable, *Tasso* does at this day carry it not only from *Arioſto*, but likewise from all the Rest of the *Italian* Poets; And, says *Baillet*, this great Reputation *Tasso* acquir'd not by *favour*, but by *merit.*

Thuanus, in his History of the Year 1595, calls *Tasso*, A Man of an Admirable, and Prodigious Wit; who, as

Thuanus

Thuanus ſays, from his Youth was troubled with a ſort of *Frenzy*, that was incurable; but yet, in his *lucid Intervals*, he Wrote a great many things both in *Proſe* and *Verſe*, with ſo much Judgment, Elegancy, and Politeneſs of Style, that the Compaſſion Men had for his Misfortune, was at laſt turn'd into wonder and aſtoniſhment: For whereas other Men, who have this diſtemper, are generally diſorder'd in their *Intellectuals*, one way or other; it had a quite contrary effect upon him; for hereby his Wit was render'd more Pure and Volatile; his Fancy and Imagination became more quick and ready; ſo that he could with greater eaſe, make uſe of his Inventive Faculty; and he alſo manag'd his Subject with the greater judgment, and exactneſs: And, to conclude, this *Frenzy* of his, furniſh'd him with Nobler Thoughts and *Ideas*, as alſo with more Maſculine and Choice Expreſſions. But what was ſtill more Wonderful and Surprizing, was, that *Taſſo*, immediately after he came out of one of theſe *Fits*, would Compoſe his *Verſes* with the greateſt Sedateneſs of Mind, that could be; and to ſuch a degree of excellence, that ſcarce any Man, of the greateſt Parts, though he had never ſo much Leiſure, could have tranſcended; ſo that inſtead of taking *Taſſo* for one who had loſt his Senſes, we might rather (ſays *Thuanus*) have lookt on him, as a Man *Divinely Inſpir'd*.

Anthony Theiſſier, in his Additions of the *Elogies* made by *Thuanus*, ſays, That *Taſſo* at 18 Years of Age, Compos'd that Excellent Poem of his, the *Rinaldo*, the firſt Fruit of his Admirable Genius, and which gain'd him the eſteem of all ſuch, as had any delicacy of Taſte for things of this Nature. Indeed, what *Longinus* ſaid of the *Odyſſes*, That it was the Work of an Old Man, but, that this

Old

Old Man was *Homer*; The ſame may we ſay with the famous *M. Menage*, That *Rinaldo* is the Work of a Young Man, but, that this Young Man was *Torquato Taſſo.*

Teiſſier alſo informs us, That *Taſſo* was but 22 Years Old, when he begun his *Gieruſalemme Liberata*, that Incomparable Poem, the moſt accompliſh'd Piece that has been ſince the Age of *Auguſtus*, in the opinion of the moſt Judicious *Criticks*, and eſpecially of M. *de Balzac*, who affirm'd, with a great deal of Eloquence and Reaſon, That as *Virgil* is the cauſe of *Taſſo*'s not having the firſt Place among the *Epic Poets*, ſo *Taſſo* is the cauſe that *Virgil* is not the only *Epic Poet*. But yet, ſays *Teiſſier*, as there is nothing in this World abſolutely Perfect, ſo there are ſome things in this Poem, as his Deſcription of the Palace of *Armida*, and ſome other Particular things, which he mingles with his Narrations, that have ſomewhat both Childiſh and Impertinent in them, which ſeems by no means agreeable to the Gravity of an *Epic Poem*, where every thing ought to be Great and Majeſtick. And *Teiſſier* further obſerves, That *Taſſo* in this Poem, does not always keep up the Dignity of his Character, in Diſcourſes of Paſſion and Gallantry; and many other Defects *Teiſſier* takes notice of. But it ſeems, *Taſſo* himſelf was ſufficiently ſenſible of the ſeveral Imperfections of this Poem, which caus'd him to Write another upon the ſame Subject, which he call'd *Gieruſalemme Conquiſtata.*

Teiſſier ſays, There are ſome, who look upon his *Amintas* to be his chief Maſter-Piece; nay, and they tell us, That *Taſſo* himſelf was of that Opinion, and that he valu'd this *Comedy* above all his other Pieces of *Poetry*; as he thought his *Tragedy*, Intituled *Toriſmondo*, to be the worſt. But however it be, ſays *Teiſſier*, this is certain,

that

that the *Amintas* hath been imitated by the beſt of the *Italian* Poets, and eſpecially by the *Chevalier Guarini*, and by the Count *Guidabaldo Bonacelli*, and that *Paſtor Fido* and the *Filli di Sciro*, are but Copies of that excellent Piece. And for this reaſon, *Boccalin* in his *Parnaſſus* feign'd, That the *Italian* Poets having broke open *Taſſo*'s private Desk, where he kept his choiceſt Compoſitions, ſtole away his *Amintas*, which they divided amongſt themſelves; and that it might not be diſcover'd, they fled to the *Palace* of *Imitation*, as to a Secure *Sanctuary*.

Rapin, in the firſt part of his *Reflexions* on *Ariſtotle* of *Poeſie*, *ſect.* 19. remarks, That the moſt perfect *Deſign* of all *Modern Poems*, is that of *Taſſo*, nothing more Compleat has appear'd in *Italy*, though great faults are in the Conduct of it. And in the *Second Part*, *ſect.* xiii. he enumerates ſeveral of the Faults; as his mixing in his *Poem* the *light* Character with the *ſerious*, and all the force and Majeſty of *Heroick*, with the Softneſs and Delicacy of the *Eglogue* and *Lyrick Poeſie*. For the *Shepherds* adventures with *Herminia* in the *Seventh Canto*, and the Letters of her *Lovers Name*, which ſhe Carv'd on the Bark of *Bays* and *Beeches*; the *Moan* ſhe made to the *Trees* and *Rocks*; the *Purling Streams*, the *Embroider'd Meadows*; the *Singing of Birds*, in which the *Poet* himſelf took ſo much pleaſure; the *Enchanted Wood* in the *Thirteenth Canto*; the *Songs* of *Armida* in the *Fourteenth* to inſpire *Rinaldo* with Love, the *Careſſes* this Sorcereſs made him, the *Deſcription* of her *Palace*, where nothing is breath'd but Softneſs and Effeminacy, and thoſe other affected Deſcriptions, have nothing of that *Grave* and *Majeſtick Character*, which is proper for *Heroick Verſe*.

Dryden, in his *Dedication* to the Earl of *Dorset* before the Translation of *Juvenal*, observes, That *Tasso*, whose *Design* was Regular, and who observ'd the Rules of *Unity* in *Time* and *Place*, more closely than *Virgil*, yet was not so happy in his *Action*; he confesses himself to have been too *Lyrical*, that is, to have Written beneath the Dignity of *Heroick* Verse, in his *Episodes* of *Sophronia*, *Erminia*, and *Armida*; his Story is not so pleasing as *Ariosto's*; he is too flatulent sometimes, and sometimes too dry; many times unequal, and almost always forc'd; and besides, is full of Conceits, Points of Epigram and Witticisms; all which are not only below the Dignity of *Heroick* Verse, but contrary to its Nature, says *Dryden*.

The *same Author*, in the *Preface* to his *Mock-Astrologer*, tells us, That *Tasso*, the most Excellent of *Modern Poets*, and whom he reverences next to *Virgil*, has taken both from *Homer* many admirable things which are left untouch'd by *Virgil*, and from *Virgil* himself where *Homer* cou'd not furnish him.

Sir *William Temple*, in his *Essay* of *Poetry*, *pag.* 46. says, That *Arioſto* and *Tasso*, enter'd boldly upon the Scene of *Heroick* Poems; but having not Wings for so high Flights, began to learn of the Old Ones, fell upon their Imitations, and Chiefly of *Virgil*, as far as the Force of their *Genius*, or Disadvantage of New Languages and Customs would allow.

Publius

Publius Terentius,

A *Comical Poet*, Born at *Carthage*; who at *Rome* ſerving *Terentius Lucanus*, by his means got acquaintance with *Caius Lælius*, and *Scipio Africanus*; by whom (it was ſuppos'd) he was aſſiſted in writing his Plays.

Nor do *Valgius* and *Memmius* ſtick to affirm, That ſome *Comedies* which go under the Name of *Terence* were entirely *Scipio's*. He was alſo a great Imitator of *Menander*, whom he owns to have follow'd in many of his *Comedies* almoſt Word for Word.

There are extant, Six of *Terence's Comedies.*

Daniel Heinſius, in his *Diſſertatio* before *Terence*, ſays, That the pleaſantneſs, as alſo the Elegancy, Judgment, and Beauty, which is to be found in *this Author*, is admirable, and hardly to be expreſs'd. Of the Graces and Beauty of which *Author*, as *Joſeph Scaliger* once ſaid, not one Scholar of a Hundred is a Competent Judge.

Eraſmus, in the 28*th.* Book of his *Epiſtles*, *Epiſt.* 20. tells us, There is no Author, from whom we can better Learn the pure *Roman* Style, than from *Terence*; and that there is more exact Judgment in one *Comedy* of *Terence*, than in the ſeveral *Comedies* of *Plautus*, put 'em all together.

Jacobus Crucius, in the Third Book of his *Epiſtles*, in an *Epiſt.* to *Francis Leeuvius*, informs us, That *Joſeph Scaliger*, when he was an Old Man, and after he had run through almoſt all the *Arts* and *Sciences*, was ſo great an Admirer of *Terence*, that he ſeldom had him out of his Hand; And that he was never cloy'd with Reading this Incomparable Author.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, *pag.* 766. remarks, That *Terence* did ſo much affect *Purity* of *Style*, that he at any time had rather ſhew a *Roughneſs* in his *Temper*, than in his *Expreſſions*; And that as *Plautus* was for accommodating *Words* to *Things*; ſo *Terence* choſe rather to ſuit *Things* to *Words*.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 1. calls *Plautus* and *Terence*, the beſt and choiceſt of all the *Latin* Authors; and ſays that their Style is to be us'd before any other.

Voſſius, in the Fourth Book of his *Inſtitutiones Oratoriæ*, *pag.* 25. immediately after *Cicero*, gives the next Place to *Cæſar* and *Terence*, for a true, proper *Roman Style*.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, *pag.* 44. wiſhes, that *Terence* had employ'd his *Talent* upon ſome better Subject, every thing in him being ſo neat, ſo proper, and ſo pure; he is modeſt even in his *Metaphors*, nor are his Jeſts idle, or abuſive.

Lipſius, in the Second Book of his *Epiſtolicæ Quæſtiones*, *Epiſt.* 18. obſerves, That *Plautus* is often ſo *obſcene* in his Jeſts, and ſo Looſe and Immoral, that he is ſcarce fit for a Sober Man to Read; But, that *Terence* is every where ſo Modeſt, ſo Chaſte, and ſo Baſhful, that even a *Veſtal* need not be afraid of his Company.

Voſſius, in the Second Book of his *Inſtitutiones Poeticæ*, *pag.* 125. tells us, *Plautus* deſerv'd not ſo much Commendation as *Terence*; in that *his* Aim and Deſign was, to pleaſe the *People* in *General*, without making any diſtinction; whereas all that *Terence* deſir'd, was, to gain the Approbation of *Some Few*, who were Men of the beſt Reputation.

Monſieur

Monſieur *Hedelin*, Abbot of *Aubignac*, in his 3*d.* Book of The *Art* of the *Stage*, *chap.* 2. remarks, That *Terence* is pleaſanter to read than *Plautus*, becauſe he is more Elegant; but *Plautus* took better with the *Romans*, becauſe he is fuller of Action. *Terence* has many ſerious *Moral* Sayings, which is not the proper Work of *Comedy*, where the Spectators Deſign is to *laugh*. But *Plautus*, ſays *Hedelin*, is full of *Intrigues*, from which many Jeſts, and Ingenious Railleries are created, and that's the Thing we wiſh for in *Comedy*.

Rapin, in the 2*d.* part of his *Reflexions* on *Ariſtotle* of *Poeſie*, *ſect.* 26 obſerves, That *Terence's Plots* are more naturally *unravell'd*, than thoſe of *Plautus*; as thoſe of *Plautus* are more natural than thoſe of *Ariſtophanes*. And though *Cæſar* call *Terence* a *Diminitive Menander*, becauſe he only had the Sweetneſs and the Smoothneſs, but had not the force and vigor, yet (ſays *Rapin*) he has writ in a *manner* ſo natural, and ſo judicious, that of a *Copy*, as he was, he is become an *Original*; for never Man had ſo clear an inſight into *Nature*.

St. *Euremont*, in his *Miſcellaneous Eſſays*, in his Judgment upon *Seneca*, takes notice, that *Terence* is generally ſaid, to be the beſt of all the Ancient Authors, for hitting the Humours and Tempers of Men: But, ſays St. *Euremont*, there is this Objection to him, That he has not *Extent* enough; and his whole *Talent* goes no further, than to give a true, and natural Repreſentation of a *Servant*, an *Old Man*, a *Covetous Father*, a *Debauch'd Son*, or a *Slave*. This is the utmoſt of what *Terence* can do. You are not to expect from him, any thing of *Gallantry*, or *Paſſion*, or of the Thoughts, or Diſcourſe of a *Gentleman*.

Quintilian

Quintilian says, That *Terence*'s Writings were the most Elegant of the Kind; but, that they would yet have been more beautiful, if the *Verse* had been the *Iambick* of Six Feet. But some of the *Modern Criticks* have taken great offence at this Exception of *Quintilian*; and among the rest, *Boeclerus* says, that *Georg. Fabricius* had reason to confute *Quintilian* in this particular.

Theocritus,

A *Sicilian* Poet, of *Syracuse*; he flourish'd in the 123*d. Olympiad*, in the time of *Ptolemæus Philadelphus*. He was put to Death by the Command of *Hiero* the *Tyrant*, for having made some Reflexions on him.

He wrote *Bucolicks* in the *Dorick* Dialect, which *Virgil* in his *Bucolicks* imitates.

Although *Theocritus* was not the first Inventer of the *Bucolick* Verse, yet he is allow'd to be the first that brought it to perfection. Hence therefore it is, that either *his* Name, or that of *his Country*, is sometimes apply'd, by way of *Epithet*, to this kind of Verse, as it appears by the Example of *Virgil*:

Prima Syracusio *dignata est ludere Versu*
Nostra, nec erubuit Sylvas habitare Thaleia. Virg. Eclog. 6.

Quintilian, in his Tenth Book, *chap.* 1. says, That *Theocritus* is admirable in his Kind; but, that his Muse is clowniſh, and is afraid of the *Court* and *City*.

Daniel

Daniel Heinſius, in his Edition of *Theocritus*, calls *him* the chief of *Bucolick* Writers, an Author whoſe Graces and Beauty no one ſufficiently comprehends.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, *pag.* 12. affirms, That *Theocritus*'s Style, to ſuch as throughly underſtand it, ſeems to be natural, eaſie, and ſweet, and in its Kind admirable; that *Virgil* lik'd it ſo well, that in his *Bucolicks* he propos'd it for his imitation; but, that he did not always arrive at the extraordinary ſweetneſs of *Theocritus*.

Rapin, in the 2*d.* part of his *Reflexions* on *Ariſtotle* of *Poeſie*, *ſect.* 27. ſays, That the *Models* to be propos'd to write well in the *Eglogue* or *Bucolick*, are *Theocritus* and *Virgil.* He ſays, *Theocritus* is more ſweet, more natural, and more delicate, by the Character of the *Greek Tongue*. *Virgil* is more judicious, more exact, more regular, and more modeſt, by the Character of his own *Wit*, and by the *Genius* of the *Latin* Tongue. *Theocritus* has more of all the Graces that make the ordinary Beauty of *Poetry*; *Virgil* has more of *good Senſe*, more vigor, more nobleneſs, more modeſty. After all, ſays *Rapin*, *Theocritus* is the *Original*, *Virgil* is only the *Copy*: Though ſome things *he* hath *Copyed* ſo happily, that they equal the *Original* in many places.

Dryden, in his *Preface* to *Sylvæ*, or the Second Part of *Poetical Miſcellanies*, obſerves, That that which diſtinguiſhes *Theocritus* from all other *Poets*, both *Greek* and *Latin*, and which raiſes him even above *Virgil* in his *Eclogues*, is the inimitable tenderneſs of his *Paſſions*; and the natural Expreſſion of them in Words ſo becoming of a *Paſtoral.* A Simplicity ſhines through all he writes: He ſhows his Art and Learning by diſguiſing both. His *Shepherds* never riſe above their Country Education in their Complaints of *Love*: There is the

ſame

ſame difference betwixt *Him* and *Virgil*, as there is betwixt *Taſſo*'s *Aminta*, and the *Paſtor Fido* of *Guarini*. *Virgil*'s *Shepherds* are too well read in the Philoſophy of *Epicurus*, and of *Plato*; and *Guarini*'s ſeem to have been bred in *Courts*. But *Theocritus* and *Taſſo*, have taken *theirs* from *Cottages* and *Plains*. It was ſaid of *Taſſo*, in relation to his Similitudes, *Mai eſce del Boſco*: That he never departed from the *Woods*, that is, all his *Compariſons* were taken from the *Country*: The ſame, *Dryden* obſerves, may be ſaid of our *Theocritus*; he is ſofter than *Ovid*, he touches the *Paſſions* more delicately; and performs all this out of his own *Fond*, without diving into the Arts and Sciences for a ſupply. Even his *Dorick* Dialect has an incomparable Sweetneſs in its *Clownishneſs*, like a *fair Shepherdeſs* in her *Countrey Ruſſet*, talking in a *Yorkſhire* Tone. This (ſays *Dryden*) was impoſſible for *Virgil* to imitate; becauſe the ſeverity of the *Roman* Language denied him that advantage. *Spencer* has endeavour'd it in his *Shepherds Calendar*; but neither will it ſucceed in *Engliſh*, for which reaſon, *Dryden* ſays, he forbore to attempt it.

Tanneguy le Fevre, in his *Abridgment* of the Lives of the *Greek* Poets, remarks, That the *Dorick* Dialect which *Theocritus* uſes, is much ſweeter than the Language of the firſt *Doricks*. He ſays, whoever will but examine the Character of this Poet, will find him very eaſie and natural: And, that *this Author* has the ſame advantage over *Virgil* in *Bucolicks*, as the *Greek* Language has over the *Latin* in that reſpect.

Albius

Albius Tibullus,

A *Roman* Knight, Born in the ſame Year with *Ovid*, being in the Second Year of the 184*th. Olympiad.* He flouriſh'd about 18 Years before *Chriſt.* He was very intimate with *Horace* and *Ovid.* What Eſtate he had, he conſum'd, being one of an Amorous Complexion.

He was Famous for his *Elegies*; Four Books whereof he Compos'd, which were commonly Printed with *Catullus.*

Petrus Crinitus, in his *De Poetis Latinis*, ſays, That *Tibullus* went beyond all the *Latin Poets* for expreſſing the Paſſions; as alſo for Elegance, and ſweetneſs of Temper.

Quintilian, in his Tenth Book, *cap.* 1. thought *Tibullus*, for *Elegy*, to be the moſt pure and Elegant of all the *Poets*: though, as he tells us, ſome prefer'd *Propertius* before him.

Rolandus Mareſius, in his Second Book of *Epiſtles*, *Epiſt.* 6. tells us, That, though it may be thought a Piece of Confidence in him, to contradict ſo great a *Critick* as *Quintilian*, who ſeems to prefer *Tibullus*; yet, for my part, ſays *Mareſius*, I own, I am one of *thoſe*, who give the preference to *Propertius.* For although *Tibullus* be wonderfully Pleaſant and Elegant, and much more Correct in the *Latin Tongue* than the *other* (who often imitates the *Greek* Poets) and is alſo more curious and exact in his Verſe; yet *Propertius* ſeems to ſurpaſs him in Learning, and in ſweetneſs of Temper. But, as *Mareſius* obſerves, though *Propertius* was of ſuch an Excellent Sedate Temper; yet he does ſometimes expreſs his *Paſſions*

with as much Heat and Vehemency, as the hotteſt *Lover* of 'em all.

Lipſius, in the Firſt Book of his *Variæ Lectiones*, *cap.* 21. ſtiles *Tibullus* a Poet exceeding Elegant, in whoſe Writings the *Latin Tongue* appears according to its true and native Elegance. *He ſays*, There are ſome *Epigrams* concerning the *Amours* of *Sulpitia* and *Cerinthus*, Compoſed by *Tibullus*, which are indeed very Fine and Beautifull.

Rapin, in the Second Part of his *Reflexions*, *ſect.* 29. remarks, That they who have Writ *Elegy* beſt amongſt the *Latins*, are *Tibullus*, *Propertius*, and *Ovid*. He ſays, *Tibullus* is Elegant and Polite; *Propertius* Noble and High; and *Ovid* is to be Prefer'd to both; becauſe he is more Natural, more Moving, and more Paſſionate; and *thereby* he has better expreſs'd the Character of *Elegy* than the *others*.

The *ſame Author*, *ſect.* xiv. obſerves to us, That *Tibullus*, otherwiſe ſo exact and polite in his *Elegies*, falls ſhort in his *Panegyrick* of *Meſſala*; ſo hard is it to praiſe well.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, *pag.* 863. ſays, That *Tibullus* is almoſt every where Uniform, and of a Piece; that he is Conſiſtent with himſelf, and ſuſtains his Character; that he generally gives one and the ſame *Turn* to things; but yet ſays *Scaliger*, he is the moſt Polite of all that ever Writ *Elegies*. *He adds*, That his ſo often uſing the *Infinitive Moods* of the *Præterperfect Tenſe*, of *Five Syllables*, ſuch as *Continuiſſe*, *Diſcubuiſſe*, *Increpuiſſe*, *Pertimuiſſe*, and many others, is a thing very unpleaſant, and diſagreeable.

The *ſame Author* does further remark, That the *Epigrams*, at the end of the Fourth Book, are both hard, Language, and unpleaſant; And, that his Poem, where-

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in he praiſes *Meſſala*, is ſo looſe, and careleſs, and ſo deſtitute either of Vigor, or Harmony, that 'tis Natural to believe, 'twas Publiſh'd before it was finiſh'd, and that he had not leiſure to Review it.

Marcus Hieronymus Vida.

AN Excellent *Latin* Poet, Born at *Cremona*; at laſt Promoted to the Biſhoprick of *Alba.*

His Works conſiſt chiefly of theſe following Poems, his *Chriſtias*, or Poem of the Life and Death of *Chriſt*, in Six Books; his three Books *De Arte Poeticâ*; his Two Books of the Care and Management of *Silk-Worms*, his Deſcription of the Game at *Cheſſe*, in one Book; beſides *Hymns*, *Odes*, *Bucolicks*, *Eglogues*, &c.

He Died the 27*th.* Day of *September* 1566. and in the 59*th.* Year of his Age.

Boiſſardus, in his *Icones Virorum Illuſtrium*, ſays, That *Vida* was ſuch an excellent Poet, that in every body's Opinion, he came very near to *Virgil*; a ſufficient Inſtance whereof, ſays *Boiſſard*, is that Famous, and never enough to be admir'd Piece, his *Chriſtias*: a Poem, which (doubtleſs) for Matter, Compoſition, and Style, ought juſtly to be prefer'd, to all that was ever Writ, by the beſt Poets of this Age.

Lilius Gyraldus, in his *Dialogue* of the *Poets*, tells us, That no Man in that Age, carry'd *Poetry* to ſo great a height as *Vida* did; without any help from the *Greeks*, following none but *Virgil.* He was, ſays *Gyraldus*, a

Man of a large Soul, and had a true *Poetical Genius*; but his chief *Knack* lay, in a wonderful, happy way of Diſpoſing, and Illuſtrating his ſeveral Subjects.

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poeticâ*, *pag.* 802, obſerves, That *Vida* had got a great Reputation by his Three Books *De Arte Poetica*; and that his Honour is the the greater, in that he has handled this Subject, with much more *Art* and *Method* than ever *Horace* did.

But for all *Scaliger* has given ſo high a Character of *Vida*'s Poem *De Arte Poeticâ*; yet, he is far from owning it to be an Accompliſh'd Piece. For in a Letter to his Son *Sylvius*, Printed before his Seven Books *De Poetica*, agrees with him, that *Vida* is a Man of good Senſe, and that he has given very good Rules and Inſtructions; but yet he ſays, they are more proper for rectifying the Errors of *Poets*, and to make them ſee their faults, than to Learn them the *Art* of *Poetry*, and to form their Spirit and Imagination; ſo that, in a Word, they are not ſo proper to make a *Poet*, as to form one that is already ſo.

He further *adds*, That *Vida* has (indeed) very well re-eſtabliſh'd that *Order* and *Method*, which is ſo neceſſary in the *Art* of *Poetry*; which *Ariſtotle* had neglected, and *Horace* had perverted and ſpoil'd; but, that he has handled his Matter rather as a *Poet*, than like a *Maſter*; and, that it looks, as if it were rather intended for the *Theater*, than deſign'd for the *School*.

Julius Saliger, in the ſame Book, *pag.* 806. remarks, That of all the ſeveral Works, that ever *Vida* Wrote, there were none, that cotributed more to his Reputation, than his Two Books concerning *Silk-Worms*. This Poem, ſays *Scaliger*, is the *King* of *Vida*'s Works. It is much more Correct and Elaborate than his other Poems, and does really contain more of the *Art* of *Poetry*.

That

That, ſays *Scaliger*, which deſerves to be put in the Second Place, in the Opinion of the *Criticks*, is his Poem of the Game at *Cheſſe*. The Invention, ſays *Scaliger*, is pretty enough, although it would better have become a Young Man, than a perſon of his Gravity. He gives to every thing ſo fine a *Turn*, that that alone might be ſufficient to convince us, that he had an admirable *Genius*; and the Style of it does very much reſemble that of *Virgil*.

Borrichius, in his *De Poetis*, *pag.* 107. ſays, That *Vida* in his two Poems concerning *Silk-Worms*, and his Deſcription of the Game at *Cheſſe*, is very exact in his Stile; *that* he is regular and juſt in the Diſpoſition, and Ordonance of his *Fable*; equal and well proportion'd in the Diſtribution of his Parts; *that* he is full of force and vigor; *that* he hath a noble *Air*, even in the moſt minute Matters; And, to conclude, *that* he is every where Florid and Elegant.

Rapin, in the Second Part of his *Reflections* on *Ariſtotle's* Book of *Poeſie*, *ſect.* x. informs us, That *He*, among the *Moderns*, who has the beſt *Genius* to ſuſtain all the Nobleneſs of Narration in *Heroick* Verſe, is *Jerom Vida*, Biſhop of *Alba*, in his Poem *on the Death of Jeſus Chriſt*; And were it not (ſays *Rapin*) that ſometimes he fell into low Expreſſions, and Harſhneſſes, like thoſe of *Lucretius*, his Style had been Incomparable.

But the *ſame Author*, *ſect.* 16. tells us, that *Vida* had a good *Genius* for Writing in *Latin*; that the *Purity* of his Style is Admirable; but, the Contrivance of his *Fable* has no Delicateneſs; his *Manner* holds no ſort of Proportion to the Dignity of his *Matter*, or *Subject*.

As for the *Hymns*, *Odes*, *Eglogues*, and the other *little Pieces* Compos'd by *Vida*, we are inform'd by *Borrichius*, that

that they are much inferiour to his Three *Larger Poems.* Nay, *Julius Scaliger* ſays plainly, They are Childiſh and Trivial; And, that whenever he had a Mind to imitate *Catullus*, inſtead of reaching the Natural Graces and Beauties of that excellent *Poet*, he rendered himſelf mighty ridiculous.

But, if any one thinks this Cenſure of *Scaliger* too ſevere; let him then be ſatisfi'd with *Rapin's* Remark, who tells us, that *Vida*, in theſe *little Pieces*, has a *Fancy* too limited; and his *Idea* ſeems conſtrain'd, whilſt he is too ſcrupulouſly imploy'd about the *purity* of his *Latin.*

Publius Virgilius Maro.

THE Prince of the *Latin Heroick Poets*; He was the Son of *Maro*, a mean Perſon, ſome ſay a *Potter*, Born in the Third Year of the 177. *Olympiad*, on the Fifteenth of *October*, about 67 Years before *Chriſt*, at *Andes*, a Village not far from *Mantua*; whence he is ſtil'd the *Mantuan Swan.* He died at *Brunduſium*, a City of *Calabria*, in *Italy*, on the 22*d.* of *September*, the Second Year of the 190. *Olympiad*, in the One and Fiftieth Year of his Age.

He Wrote Ten *Eglogues* or *Bucolicks*; Four Books of *Georgicks*; and Twelve Books of *Æneids.*

Julius Scaliger, in his Sixth Book *De Poetica*, *pag.* 765. ſays, That *Virgil* not only excells all *Humane* Wit; but has rais'd himſelf to a kind of equality with *Nature* it ſelf.

And

And in another place he tells us, That *Virgil* ought to be the Pattern, Rule, Beginning and End of all *Poetical* Imitation.

Macrobius, in the firſt Book of his *Saturnalia*, *cap.* 24. obſerves to us, That it is the peculiar Glory of *Virgil*, that as none by *praiſing* can add to him; ſo none by *diſpraiſing*, can detract from him.

'Tis reported of *Cicero*, that happening in his Old Age, to light upon ſomewhat that *Virgil* had Wrote, who was then very Young; *He*, by way of Propheſy cry'd out, *Magnæ Spes altera Romæ.*

Lilius Gyraldus tells us, That *Virgil* was ſo much reſpected by the *Senate* and *People of Rome*, that at any time when they heard any of his Verſes in the Theatre, every body preſently ſtood up; and if by chance *Virgil* was preſent, *Cornelius Tacitus* ſays, They gave him the ſame reſpect, as they did to *Cæſar* himſelf.

Budæus, in his Third Book *De Aſſe*, remarks, That *Virgil*'s Verſes might very well be call'd *Golden Verſes*; becauſe he receiv'd of *Octavia*, five Pieces of Gold, for Twenty Verſes.

Donatius, in the Life of *Virgil*, informs us, That *Virgil* us'd conſtantly every Morning, to Write down a great many Verſes; and in the Afternoon, when he was cooler, and in better temper, he would then Correct and Amend them; And, that many times of a Hundred Verſes, there would not be above half a Dozen left uncorrected; and therefore he would commonly ſay, that *his Works were at firſt Monſtrous and Miſhapen, but like the Bear, at laſt he lickt them into ſhape.*

Rapin, in the Second Part of his *Reflexions on* Ariſtotles *Book of* Poeſie, *ſect.* xv. ſays, as for the *Latin Poets*, never any poſſeſs'd all the *Graces* of *Poeſie* in ſo eminent a degree, as *Virgil*; he has an admirable *taſte* for what

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is Natural, an exquisite *Judgment* for the Contrivance, an incomparable *delicacy* for the Numbers and Harmony of *Versification.* The *Design* of his Poem, well consider'd in all the Circumstances, is (says *Rapin*) the most judicious, and the best devis'd that ever was, or ever will be.

Dryden, in his *Preface to* Sylvæ: *Or, The Second Part of* Poetical *Miscellanies*, calls *Virgil*, a succinct and grave Majestick Writer; One who weigh'd not only every Thought, but every Word and Syllable. Who was still aiming to crowd his Sence into as narrow a compass as possibly he cou'd; for which reason he is so very Figurative, says *Dryden*, that he requires, (I may almost say) a *Grammer* apart to Construe him. His *Verse* is every where sounding the very thing in your Ears, whose Sense it bears: Yet the *Numbers* are perpetually *Varied*, to increase the Delight of the Reader; so that the same sounds are never repeated twice together. But though he is Smooth where Smoothness is requir'd, yet he is so far from affecting it, that he seems rather to disdain it. For he frequently makes use of *Synalæpha*'s, and concludes his Sence in the Middle of his Verse. He is every where above Conceipts of *Epigrammatick* Wit, and gross *Hyperboles*: He maintains Majesty in the midst of Plainess; He shines, but glares not; and is Stately without Ambition, which is the vice of *Lucan.*

The *same Author* in his *Dedication* to the Earl of *Dorset*, before the *Translation* of *Juvenal*, *pag.* 6. observes to us, That *Virgil* has confin'd his *Works* within the compass of *Eighteen Thousand Lines*, and has not treated many Subjects; yet he ever had, and ever will have the Reputation of the best Poet. *Martial* says of him, that he cou'd have excell'd *Varius* in *Tragedy*, and *Horace* in *Lyrick Poetry*; but out of deference to his Friends he attempted neither.

Sir

Sir *William Temple*, in his *Eſſay* of *Poetry*, *pag.* 18. remarks, That *Homer* was without Diſpute the moſt Univerſal *Genius* that has been known in the World, and *Virgil* the moſt Accompliſh'd. To the *firſt*, muſt be allow'd, the moſt fertile Invention, the richeſt Vein, the moſt general Knowledg, and the moſt lively Expreſſions; To the *laſt*, the nobleſt Idea's, the juſteſt Inſtitution, the wiſeſt Conduct, and the Choiceſt Elocution. But, ſays *Temple*, to ſpeak in the *Painters* Terms, we find in the Works of *Homer*, the moſt Spirit, Force, and Life; in thoſe of *Virgil*, the beſt Deſign, the trueſt Proportions, and the greateſt Grace; The Colouring in Both ſeems equal, and indeed, in Both is admirable. *Homer* hath more Fire and Rapture, *Virgil* more Light and Sweetneſs; or at leaſt the *Poetical* Fire was more raging in *One*, but clearer in the *Other*; which makes the *firſt* more amazing, and the *latter* more agreeable. The *Oare* was richer in *One*, but in t' *other*, more refin'd, and better allay'd, to make up excellent Work. upon the whole, ſays *Temple*, I think it muſt be confeſs'd, That *Homer* was of the Two, and, perhaps, of all others, the Vaſteſt, the Sublimeſt, and the moſt Wonderful *Genius*; and that he has been generally ſo eſteem'd, there cannot be a greater Teſtimony given, than what has been by ſome obſerv'd, That not only the greateſt Maſters, have found in his Works, the beſt and trueſt Principles of all their Sciences or Arts; but that the nobleſt Nations, have derived from them, the Original of their ſeveral Races, though it be hardly yet agreed, whether his Story be True, or Fiction. In ſhort, ſays *Temple*, theſe Two *Immortal Poets*, muſt be allow'd to have ſo much excelled in their Kinds, as to have exceeded all Compariſon, to have even extinguiſhed Emulation, and in a manner confined *true Poetry*, not

only to their *Two Languages*, but to their very *Perſons*. And I am apt to believe, ſays *Temple*, ſo much of the true *Genius* of *Poetry* in general, and of its Elevation in theſe Two Particulars, that I know not, whether of all the Numbers of Mankind, that live within the Compaſs of a Thouſand Years; for one Man that is Born capable of making ſuch a Poet as *Homer* or *Virgil*, there may not be a Thouſand born capable of making as great *Generals* of *Armies*, or *Miniſters* of *State*, as any the moſt Renowned in Story.

Joſeph Scaliger, in *Scaligerana* 2. ſays, That *Virgil*'s *Georgicks* are admirable, but he has taken ſeveral things from *Ariſtotle*. His *Æneids* are not ſo *Correct* as the *Georgicks*, for he intended to have Wrote Four and Twenty Books, as well as *Homer*. This the *Ancients* tell us, was the Reaſon, that *Virgil* at his Death Commanded they ſhould be Burnt. *Scaliger* alſo informs us, That the Verſe *Ergo ibit in Ignes*, was foiſted in ſince *Virgil*'s time, and that it is not of any Ancient Date.

Virgil's *Æneids* were ſo much eſteem'd of by *Auguſtus Cæſar*, that after *Virgil*'s Death, who had left in charge with ſome Friends to have that *Poem* burnt, he committed it to the cuſtody and ſtrict care of *Lucius Varius*, and *Plotius Tucca*, with Command, that nothing ſhould be alter'd. Which, ſays *Pliny*, *lib.* 7. *Nat. Hiſt. cap.* 30. gave much a greater Credit and Reputation to the ſaid *Poem*, than if the Author himſelf had approv'd of it.

Edmund

Edmund Waller,

A Gentleman not many Years Deceas'd: Whoſe Name will ever be dear to all Lovers of *Poetry.* His Compoſitions are Univerſally applauded; and they are thought fit to ſerve as a Standard, for all Succeeding *Poems.* He was a Friend to the Ingenious *Fletcher*; as appears by his Verſes, Printed at the beginning of thoſe *Plays*; and was ſo far a lover of *Dramatick Poetry,* that he Tranſlated part of a Play, in which the Earl of *Dorſet* and *Middleſex,* was concern'd; *viz. Pompey the Great,* a *Tragedy,* Acted by the Servants of his Royal Highneſs the *Duke* of *York*; Printed *4to. London,* 1664.

Beſides this *Play,* he has a Volume of *Poems* Extant, which have been ſeveral times Reprinted; the Fourth Edition was Printed, *Octavo, Lond.* 1682. There is newly Publiſh'd a Second Part, containing his Alteration of *The Maid's Tragedy,* and whatſoever of *his* was left unprinted, Publiſht, *8vo. Lond.* 1690.

Waller, a Name that carries every thing in it, that's either Great or Graceful in *Poetry.* He was indeed the Parent of *Engliſh* Verſe, and the Firſt that ſhew'd us our Tongue had Beauty and Numbers in it. *Our* Language owes more to *him,* than the *French* does to *Cardinal Richlieu,* and the whole *Academy.* The *Tongue* came into his hands, like a *Rough Diamond*; he Poliſh'd it firſt, and to that degree, that all *Artiſts* ſince him have admired the Workmanſhip, without pretending to mend it. *Sucklin* and *Carew,* wrote ſome few things

smoothly enough, but as all they did in this kind was not very Considerable, so 'twas a little later than the earliest Pieces of Mr. *Waller*. He undoubtedly stands first in the List of *Refiners*, and for ought I know, last too; for I question whether in *Charles* the *Second's* Reign, *English* did not come to its full Perfection; and whether it has not had its *Augustian Age*, as well as the *Latin*. It seems to be already mixt with Foreign Languages, as far as its *purity* will bear; and, as *Chymists* say of their *Menstruums*, to be quite sated with the Infusion. But Posterity will best judge of this. In the mean time, 'tis a surprizing Reflexion, that between what *Spencer* wrote last, and *Waller* first, there should not be much above Twenty Years distance; and yet the *One*'s Language, like the Money of that Time, is as currant now as ever; whilest the *Other*'s Words are like Old Coyns, one must go to an *Antiquary* to understand their true Meaning and Value. Such advances may a great *Genius* make, when it undertakes any thing in earnest. Some *Painters* will hit the chief Lines, and Master Strokes of a Face so truly, that through all the differences of Age, the Picture shall still bear a Resemblance. This Art was Mr. *Waller*'s; he sought out, in this flowing Tongue of *Ours*, what parts would last, and be of standing use and Ornament; and this he did so successfully, that his Language is now as fresh, as it was at first setting out. Were we to judge barely by the *Wording*, we could not know what was Wrote at *Twenty*, and what at *Fourscore*. He complains indeed of a *Tyde* of *Words* that comes in upon the *English* Poet, o'reflows whate're he Builds: but this was less his Case than any Mans, that ever Wrote; and the mischief on't is, this very complaint will last long enough to confute it self. For though *English* be *mouldring Stone*,

Stone, as he tells us there; yet he has certainly pickt the beſt out of a bad *Quarry*.

We are no leſs beholding to him for the *New Turn* of *Verſe*, which he brought in, and the Improvement he made in *Our Numbers*. Before his Time, Men *Rhym'd* indeed, and that was all: As for the Harmony of Meaſure, and that Dance of Words, which good Ears are ſo much pleas'd with, They knew nothing of it. Their *Poetry* then was made up almoſt entirely of *Monoſillables*; which, when they come together in any Cluſter, are certainly the moſt harſh untunable things in the World. If any Man doubts of this, let him Read Ten Lines in *Donne*, and he'll be quickly convinc'd. Beſides, their Verſes ran all into one another, and hung together, throughout a whole Copy, like the *hook'd Atoms*, that Compoſe a Body in *Des Cartes*. There was no diſtinction of Parts, no regular Stops, nothing for the *Ear* to reſt upon.— But as ſoon as the Copy began, down it went, like a *Larum*, Inceſſantly; and the Reader was ſure to be out of Breath, before he got to the end of it. So that really *Verſe* in thoſe days was but down-right *Proſe*, tagg'd with *Rhymes*. Mr. *Waller* remov'd all theſe Faults, brought in more *Polyſyllables*, and ſmoother Meaſures; bound up his Thoughts better, and in a Cadence more agreeable to the Nature of the Verſe he wrote in: So that where-ever the Natural Stops of that were, he contriv'd the little breakings of his Senſe ſo, as to fall in with 'em. And for that reaſon, ſince the ſtreſs of *Our* Verſe lyes commonly upon the laſt Syllable, you'll hardly ever find him uſing a Word of no Force there. I would ſay, if I were not afraid the Reader would think me too nice, that he commonly cloſes with *Verbs*,

Verbs, in which we know the Life of Language conſiſts.

Among other Improvements, we may reckon that of his *Rhymes*: Which are always good, and very often the better for being *New*. He had a fine Ear, and knew how quickly that Senſe was cloy'd by the ſame round of Chiming Words ſtill returning upon it. 'Tis a decided Caſe by the great Maſter of Writing. *Quæ ſunt ampla & Pulchra, diu placere poſſunt, quæ lepida & concinna*, (amongſt which *Rhyme* muſt, whether it will or no, take its place) *citò ſatietate afficiunt aurium Senſum faſtidioſiſſimum.* This Mr. *Waller* underſtood very well, and therefore, to take off the danger of a Surfeit that way, ſtrove to pleaſe by Variety, and new Sounds. Had he carried this Obſervation (among others) as far as it would go, it muſt, methinks, have ſhewn him the incurable Fault of this *jingling* kind of *Poetry*, and have led his later Judgment to *Blank Verſe*. But he continued an obſtinate Lover of *Rhyme* to the very laſt: 'Twas a *Miſtreſs* that never appear'd unhandſome in his Eyes, and was Courted by him long after *Sachariſſa* was forſaken. He had raiſed it, and brought it to that Perfection we now enjoy it in: And the *Poet*'s Temper (which has always a little Vanity in it) would not ſuffer him ever to ſlight a thing, he had taken ſo much pains to Adorn. See the *Anonymous Writer* of the *Preface*, before the *Second Part* of Mr. *Waller*'s *Poems.*

Dryden, in his Dedication of The *Rival-Ladies* to the Earl of *Orrery*, ſays, That the Excellence and Dignity of *Rhyme*, were never fully known, till Mr. *Waller* taught it; he firſt made Writing eaſily an Art; firſt ſhew'd us to conclude the Senſe, moſt commonly,

in

in *Diſticks*; which in the Verſe of thoſe before him, runs on for ſo many Lines together, that the Reader is out of breath to over-take it.

Rimer, in his *Short View of Tragedy*, *pag.* 78. obſerves, That though the Reformation of the *Italian* Language was begun and finiſh'd well nigh at the ſame time by *Boccace*, *Dante*, and *Petrarch*. Our Language retain'd ſomething of the Churl; ſomething of the *Stiff* and *Gothiſh* did ſtick upon it, till long after *Chaucer*.

Chaucer threw in *Latin*, *French Provencial*, and other Languages, like new *Stum* to raiſe a *Fermentation*; In Queen *Elizabeth*'s time it grew *Fine*, but came not to an *Head* and *Spirit*, did not Shine and Sparkle, till Mr. *Waller* ſet it a *running*. And one may Obſerve by his *Poem* on the *Navy*, *Anno* 1632. that not the Language only, but his *Poetry* then diſtinguiſh'd him from all his *Contemporaries*, both in *England* and in other Nations: And from all before him upwards to *Horace* and *Virgil*. For *there*, beſides the Language Clean and Majeſtick, the Thoughts New, and Noble; the Verſe Sweet, Smooth, Full and Strong; the *Turn* of the *Poem* is happy to Admiration.

Waller *came laſt, but was the Firſt whoſe Art*
Juſt Weight and Meaſure did to Verſe *impart*;
That of a well-plac'd Word could teach the force,
And ſhew'd for Poetry *a Nobler Courſe*:
His happy Genius *did our Tongue Refine,*
And eaſie Words with pleaſing Numbers joyn:
His Verſes to good Method did apply,
And chang'd harſh Diſcord to ſoft Harmony.

All

All own'd his Laws; which, long approv'd and try'd,
To present Authors now may be a Guide.
Tread boldly in his Steps, secure from Fear,
And be, like him, in your Expressions Clear.

Sir **William Soame** *in his* Translat. *of* Boileau's *Art of* Poetry, *pag.* 9.

FINIS.

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